THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

EDITED BY AUSTIN HARRISON

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NOVEMBER 1922

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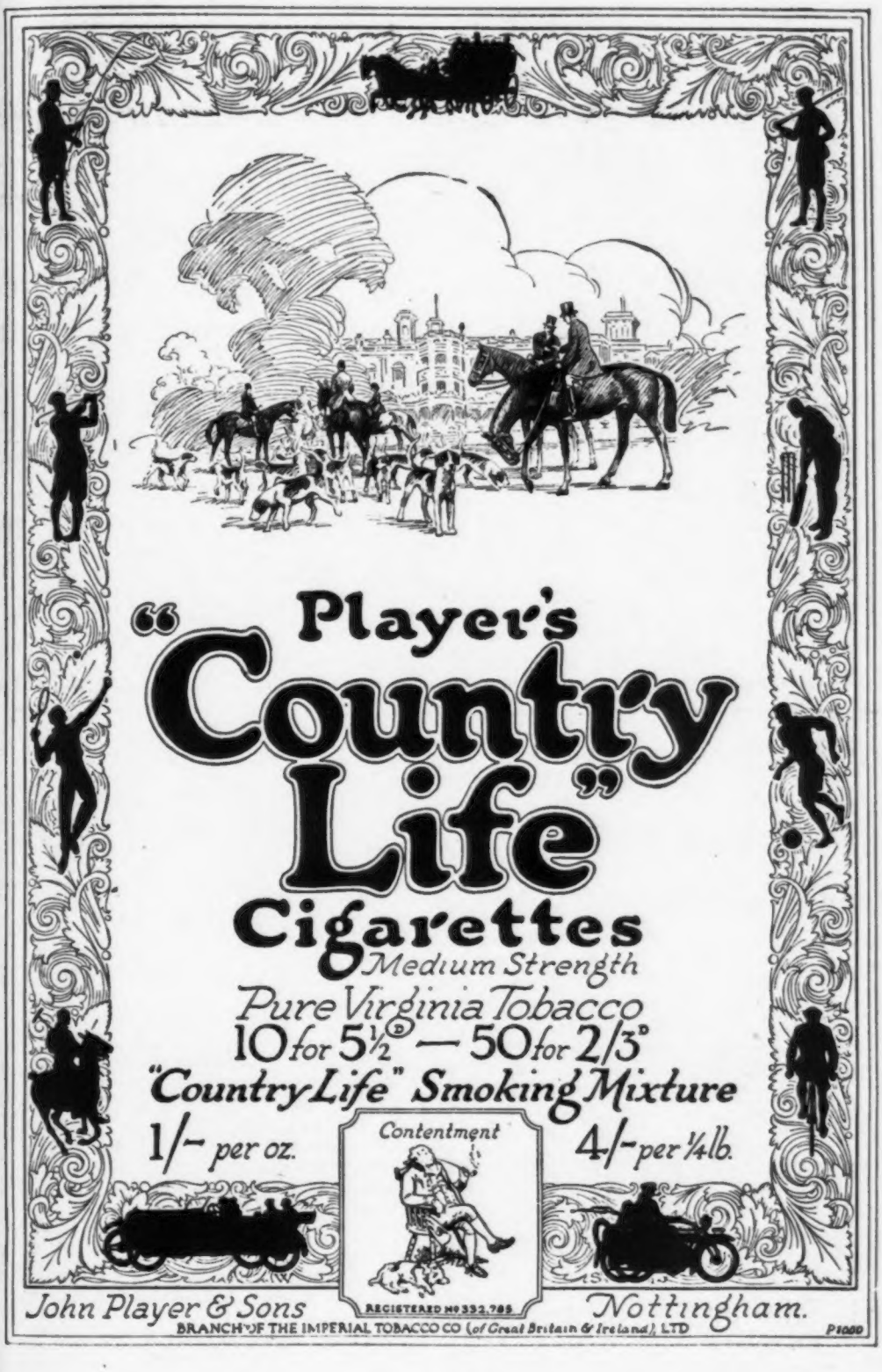
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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by Austin Harrison

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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
NOVEMBER, 1922.

Bat

By D. H. Lawrence

AT evening, sitting on this terrace,
When the sun from the west, beyond Pisa, beyond the mountains of Carrara
Departs, and the world is taken by surprise. . . .

When the tired flower of Florence is in gloom beneath the glowing
Brown hills surrounding. . . .

When under the arches of the Ponte Vecchio
A green light enters against stream, flush from the west,
Against the current of obscure Arno. . . .

Look up, and you see things flying
Between the day and the night;
Swallows with spools of dark thread sewing the shadows together.

A circle swoop, and a quick parabola under the bridge arches
Where light pushes through;
A sudden turning upon itself of a thing in the air.
A dip to the water.

And you think:
"The swallows are flying so late!"

Swallows?

Dark air-life looping
Yet missing the pure loop . . .
A twitch, a twitter, an elastic shudder in flight,
And serrated wings against the sky,
Like a glove, a black glove thrown up at the light,
And falling back.

Never swallows!
Bats!
The swallows are gone.

At a wavering instant the swallows gave way to bats
By the Ponte Vecchio . . .
Changing guard.

Bats, and an uneasy creeping in one's scalp
As the bats swoop overhead!
Flying madly.

Pipistrello!
Black piper on an infinitesimal pipe.
Little lumps that fly in air and have voices indefinite, wildly vindictive,
Wings like bits of umbrella.

Bats!

Creatures that hang themselves up like an old rag, to sleep;
And disgustingly upside down.

Hanging upside down like rows of disgusting old rags
And grinning in their sleep.
Bats!

Not for me!

Tortoises

By D. H. Lawrence

Baby Tortoise

You know what it is to be born alone,
Baby tortoise!

The first day to heave your feet little by little from the shell,
Not yet awake,
And remain lapsed on earth,
Not quite alive.

A tiny, fragile, half-animate bean.

To open your tiny beak-mouth, that looks as if it would never open,
Like some iron door;
To lift the upper hawk-beak from the lower base
And reach your skinny little neck
And take your first bite at some dim bit of herbage,
Alone, small insect,
Tiny bright-eye,
Slow one.

To take your first solitary bite
And move on your slow, solitary hunt.

Your bright, dark little eye,
Your eye of a dark disturbed night,
Under its slow lid, tiny baby tortoise,
So indomitable.

No one ever heard you complain.

You draw your head forward, slowly, from your little wimple
And set forward, slow-dragging, on your four-pinned toes,
Rowing slowly forward.
Whither away, small bird?

Rather like a baby working its limbs,
Except that you make slow, ageless progress
And a baby makes none.

The touch of sun excites you,
And the long ages and the lingering chill
Make you pause to yawn,
Opening your impervious mouth,
Suddenly beak-shaped, and very wide, like some suddenly gaping pincers;
Soft red tongue, and hard thin gums,
Then close the wedge of your little mountain front
Your face, baby tortoise.

Do you wonder at the world, as slowly you turn your head in its wimple
And look with laconic, black eye?
Or is sleep coming over you again,
The non-life?

You are so hard to wake.

Are you able to wonder?
Or is it just your indomitable will and pride of the first life
Looking round
And slowly pitching itself against the inertia
Which had seemed invincible?

The vast inanimate,
And the fine brilliance of your so tiny eye,
Challenger.

Nay, tiny shell-bird,
What a huge vast inanimate it is, that you must row against!
What an incalculable inertia!

Challenger,
Little Ulysses, fore-runner,
No bigger than my thumb-nail,
Buon viaggio.

All animate creation on your shoulder,
Set forth, little Titan, under your battle-shield.

TO A KETTLE

The ponderous, preponderate,
Inanimate universe;
And you are slowly moving, pioneer, you alone.

How vivid your travelling seems now, in the troubled sunshine,
Stoic, Ulyssean atom;
Suddenly hasty, reckless, on high toes.

Voiceless little bird,
Resting your head half out of your wimple
In the slow dignity of your eternal pause.

Alone, with no sense of being alone,
And hence six times more solitary;
Fulfilled of the slow passion of pitching through immemorial ages
Your little round house in the midst of chaos.

Over the garden earth,
Small bird,
Over the edge of all things.

Traveller,
With your tail tucked a little on one side
Like a gentleman in a long-skirted coat.

All life carried on your shoulder,
Invincible fore-runner.

To a Kettle

By Barbara Gregory

SING!
Pretty thing!
I love your gleaming knob
As you simmer on the hob,
Pretty thing!
Sing!

Steam!
Little dream!
Be quick, my pet. Ah! see,
I wait to make the tea!
Little dream!
Steam!

Quick!
Another stick
May speed you up a bit,
And make you boil and spit.
Another stick!
Quick!

Shoot
(Little brute!)
Out vapour's steaming hope,
And bubbles like to soap.
(Little brute!)
Shoot!

OH!
I hate you so!
Why can you never boil?
In vain seems all my toil!
I hate you so!
OH!

D——n!
Devil's dram!
Too full the thing was filled,
The water all is spilled!
Devil's dram!
D——n!

Song

By Enid R. Clay

If Love could capture Youth—
(A willing prisoner he)
Bind him with golden bands
And chain him where he stands—
Then would I fetter thee
With links of living steel
Forged in Love's armoury.

* * *

Youth is so fleet of foot
Love dies in his pursuit.

Wood-Spell

By Wilfrid Thorley

Is there no one hid in the bole or under the boughs there,
  Silently praying and hidden in mazy leaves?
For tangled in cool green twilight my dazed eyes drowse there,
  And I see nothing, but hear as the silence heaves
A dribble of hesitant speech that the winds arouse there,
  Under the boughs there.

Like a tide that flows round the keel of some ocean rover
  Sunken in sand-drift under a noon of drouth,
Now murmur on murmur flows by, and about me hover
  Sounds as of sails new-kist by the wind's cool mouth;
And my thoughts turn white as turn to the wind their lover
  The sails of the rover.

Is there no shy voice that summons my soul to surrender
  Cares of the world and gladden as sails that lean,
White sails wind-rescued that hurry the lost sea-wender
  To far away isles that only the blest have seen
Who watch for the star in the darkness, and in its splendour
  Their souls surrender?

American Poetry Comes of Age

By Robert Haven Schauffler

I HAVE discussed this article with two foreigners living in London. One, an American banker, was horrified. He warned me that if I wished to live here and succeed I must never attack the English in any way.

The other, a Canadian journalist, assured me that the Englishman loves to be attacked, because he subconsciously argues that his superiority has annoyed the antagonist. So, the more you insult him, the more flattered he feels.

I am inclined to agree with the Canadian that you English do not mind attack—but for a quite different reason. Long experience as a lawn tennis player has taught me that you possess the most splendid spirit of athletic sportsmanship in the world. When I took part in the Olympic Games in Athens, the British team were by far the best sportsmen in that athletic Babel, and it was thrilling to feel their influence leavening the international lump. We Americans are also good sportsmen. But we are second to you.

Now sportsmanship is a complex affair. It consists in (1) a passion for a fair field and no favour; (2) the grace of a good loser; (3) the grace of a good winner; (4) doggedness; and (5) team-work. And the greatest of these is the first.

Your athletes play so fairly and have such a sincere and generous regard for a sporting opponent, that I do not see how the literary men of the same nation can cherish any unsportsmanlike feelings of rancour for what they are about to read.

Is not ours an *entente* that exists on very hearty abuse of each other? I think that, unlike the *entente* with our Latin friends, wherein words must be delicately minced, we Anglo-Saxons can afford candour.

AMERICAN POETRY COMES OF AGE

At times during the past decade I have thought of writing for some American review an article about British poetry.

It would be a peculiar sort of article. It would completely ignore the work of Masefield, Davies, Meredith, Dowson, Davidson, Binyon, Bridges, Brooke, Hardy, Newbolt, Hodgson, Kipling, etc. It would, rather, after a few scathing words about Shakespeare and Milton, go out into the highways and hedges and, with diligent research, gather up the " sweet singers " of Basingstoke, Barnstaple, and Ballina, that my house might be full of straw dummies to knock down with loud, coarse laughter, to the confusion of British poetry.

Of course, this sort of thing would not succeed in America. My fellow-citizens know and love your verse much too well for that. But, if I wrote it, I should be doing exactly what one of your well-known writers did to us nine years ago. In the November, 1913, number of THE ENGLISH REVIEW, Aleister Crowley wrote on Art in America.

His article is most readable. It bristles with wit and wisdom—and the wildest unsportsmanship. His survey of our graphic arts is short and simple. All he says of sculpture is: " The only American sculptor I know of is a Lithuanian living in Paris."

This is his idea of our painting: " After Whistler and Sargent, the former not even really American . . . there is literally nobody at all till we strike the geological stratum of Penrhyn Stanlaws (whose name is Adamson, and whose birthplace Dundee!) and Charles Dana Gibson, of whose parentage one neither knows nor wishes to know anything."

This conciseness of treatment leaves the more space for an elaborate consideration of our poetry. Mr. Crowley mentions fifty-three American poets, or alleged poets. Of these, only seven have ever been heard of by the average intelligent American poetry lover. The seven are: Whitman, Poe, Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, and Lowell.

Whitman he places highest. He calls him "a man whom I detest and despise," and wittily complains that " quota-

tions from the catalogue of the Army and Navy Stores . . . make up three-quarters of his work." (We admit the catalogues, but deny the percentage.)

" I did well," writes Mr. Crowley, " to close my Whitman after a conscientious perusal, never to open it again, at least with the idea of obtaining anything of worth." After which he concludes: " Whitman is America . . . the spirit of the new continent made word."

This critic lumps Longfellow, Bryant, and Whittier together as " barbers' assistants." James Russell Lowell's work he calls " altogether without merit. . . . His success is worth no more than that of a new kind of polecat might be." I think this may appeal to Americans as shedding a novel light upon the author of the Commemoration Ode.

Having disposed of these seven known poets, Mr. Crowley goes on to have a rollicking good time with the forty-six unknown straw dummies, knocking them slap-bang off their unsought pedestals with constantly renewed zest, quoting a ridiculous bit of doggerel here and there, and giving the impression to those unfamiliar with the subject that this is a conscientiously compiled *résumé* of the chief American poets. It is, in fact, compiled with somewhat the same conscientious care that Mr. Crowley accords to our sculpture when he disregards MacMonnies, French, Barnard, the Borglums, and St. Gaudens, to concentrate on " a Lithuanian living in Paris."

This article of Mr. Crowley's followed other articles in your reviews which had dealt with our poetry in a somewhat similar spirit.

In December, 1911, Mr. Filson Young went even further than Mr. Crowley, and denied that we possessed any literature at all. Turning his back resolutely on all compromise, he refused to recognise even Whitman, Poe and Co. In this instance again THE ENGLISH REVIEW served as a vehicle for international candour.

" The time of literature in America is not yet," wrote Mr. Young; " but though the Americans are not a nation of writers, they are in the state which necessarily precedes that—they are a nation of readers. England still produces literature, but has ceased to read it; France has almost ceased to produce it. Surely in time this great nation of readers need not fear that they will not produce writers."

To stimuli like these which I have quoted, we Americans readily reacted. They hurt. Not because we have ever been over-sensitive to fair criticisms. But these were not fair. We felt that, in this respect, the greatest sportsmen in the world had failed in sportsmanship. These blows were more than a shade below the belt.

However, we tried to minimise the incident. We told ourselves that literary Britain as a whole did not think quite as badly of us as all that. And everything would have been promptly forgotten if you had not begun the practice of sending literary missionaries ever thicker and faster to our benighted land, to show us what real poetry was.

These celebrated authors, whose books we had long known and appreciated, approached us in somewhat the same spirit (though with perhaps different motives) as that in which the traditional foreign missionary used to approach the traditional incumbent of " Greenland's icy mountains."

> Shall we whose souls are lighted
> With wisdom from on high,—
> Shall we to men benighted
> The lamp of truth deny?

they seemed to ask themselves. The answer was invariably in the negative.

Still true to the good old-fashioned missionary custom, your apostles did not pay us the compliment of inquiring what was this mistaken poetic religion of ours from whose errors they were to convert us. With certain delightful exceptions (notably John Masefield, John Drinkwater, Laurence Housman, and Laurence Binyon), they were so preoccupied with real poetry that they never had occasion to bother with our alleged verse. They may have read Mr. Crowley and Mr. Young and felt further research useless.

But, instead of a tactful reticence about this fact when they rose to address us, they usually screwed in a mental monocle and declared that they knew little or nothing about our own poetry, but they would now tell us about Poetry.

Of course, it is undeniable that W. B. Yeats, in addressing the Poetry Society of America, mentioned by name four American poets. But three of the names were new to us, and sounded as though they had been selected from Mr.

Crowley's forty-six immortals. And the fourth was that naughty boy of American literature, Ezra Pound, who represents to us our own loftiest poetic achievement—about as accurately as a scarlet flannel petticoat represents it to an enthusiastic bull.

Lord Dunsany came to address the same society. He began with the usual supercilious and weary remarks about his total ignorance of American poetry. He followed these up by declaring that he had never taken time to think much about poetry, anyway, but he would now give us the conclusions which he had reached.

These were astounding. They were almost incredible. The idea that they were being uttered by a famous and talented author to a serious gathering of representative professional writers of another nation embarrassed us so much that we did not know where to look.

Lord Dunsany told us, for example, that he had pondered long and earnestly over the knotty problem of rhythm, and he had finally arrived at the decision that " all really *poetic* prose should have rhythm." (As if it were possible to compose an advertisement of shoe-blacking without that unfailing accompaniment of all written and spoken words! We began to wonder whether Saintsbury's fascinating *History of English Prose Rhythm* were as well thumbed on your side of the Atlantic as on ours.)

Naturally it cheered us somewhat when John Drinkwater immediately rose to his feet and crumpled up Lord Dunsany's notions with two or three dialectical upper-cuts to the point of the argument. But, for all that, the incident left a very cheerless impression on our minds.

Nor, when Mr. Robert Nichols arrived on our shores, did he greatly reassure us by a condescension which would scarcely have befitted a poet of thrice his years and accomplishment. For a very moderate specimen of the overseas manner of this young gentleman, let me refer the reader to a brief skit entitled " Visiting Poets," in Christopher Morley's entertaining volume *Mince Pie*, which they may find, if nowhere else, at the British Museum.

Anglo-Saxon solidarity is all the cry to-day. British article writers no longer slang our verse with quite the ferocity of a decade ago. Sometimes they even smile upon

us. I have recently found in your reviews not a little about the British love of American poetry.

The general idea is that, in the first place, deep in your heart of hearts you dote upon our poetry. (I am reminded of that Bible verse: "Whom having not seen, ye love.")

Secondly, if on the surface you may appear a little cool towards it, remember how glacial you are towards your own, and what an arctic time you once gave Keats. Thirdly and lastly, as evidence that you are not really cold toward us, see how you love Whitman and Poe. (Why not demontrate how dearly you love all Italian music by your adoration of Palestrina and Monteverde?)

The truth is, you have vaguely begun to feel our hitherto silent irritation, but you are quite mistaken about its cause. You suppose us to be annoyed because you do not like our work as much as we like yours. Not at all! We do not ask you to do that. We have never minded your ill-concealed lack of enthusiasm for our poetry. As a matter of fact, we like yours, on the whole, a good deal better than we like our own.

The things we do mind are misrepresentation, discourtesy, bad sportsmanship. America is your son. But he has been your son for some little time and he has been growing. He is now rather too old to be quite ignored, or to be ridiculed before the guests, or told to be seen and not heard, or spanked and sent supperless to bed. He has attained his majority, and respectfully asks to be treated like a grown-up.

For some years before our coming of age we have had the question of anthologies on our minds. On this, our twenty-first birthday, we are going to give ourselves the rare treat of speaking out.

Though, as you so often point out, you have unerringly chosen and taken to your bosom our best poets, Whitman and Poe, you have not been so discriminating with our anthologists. True, here again you have been unerring; but your have unerringly taken up one of our weaker anthologists, Louis Untermeyer, to the comparative neglect of our best one, Miss Rittenhouse. Your critics are for ever reproaching us for warmly welcoming to America

your second-rate writers. Well, why do you welcome our second-rate anthologies?

I am aware that you have tried to supplement the efforts of Untermeyer by anthologising us yourselves. But—how?

On the Western Front during the war I received from England *via* America a volume published in London, called *Modern American Verse*, compiled by a pseudonymous "Claire Roma." It contained several of my own poems. In fact, it contained one too many; for two adjacent poems from one of my books had been printed together as a continuous performance, without so much as a comma between them for decency's sake. This singular *mélange* began with a poem called "Scum o' the Earth," about the immigrants on Ellis Island. The second poem was about a public library in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. And when thus unequally yoked together, they formed the most surprising gibberish imaginable.

In care of his publisher I wrote to this anthologist, saying what good I could say about his book, but pointing out that when he had wedded these two alien poems, he had caused not only fusion but confusion. I begged him to delete the Pittsburg library in the still unsold copies.

No reply. So, some months later, when on leave in London, I waited upon the publisher. He remembered giving my letter to "Claire Roma," who had read him my favourable comment, but had made no allusion to the little matter of the Pittsburg library.

I hate to think it. But the conclusion is forced upon me that "Claire Roma" read his proofs with the same degree of sportsmanlike solicitude for the interests of American poetry that the average British poet and critic feels flaming in his breast. It would just serve to keep him warm with the thermometer at seventy.

I am not sure of the nationality of "Claire Roma." For all I know he may be an American in exile. But the incident may serve all the same as a true index of the tender regard meted out to American poets in British anthologies.

As a matter of fact, most of your anthologists have even more deplorable manners than your poetic lecturers. The lecturer merely says to us, in effect: "Ladies and Gentlemen, I know nothing" (*silently*—"and care less")

" about your own verse; but I will now tell you about Poetry." He then reads his own poems, seldom very well, and a long essay about another British poet, a friend of his.

The anthologists are not nearly so courteous. They publish anthologies of " English Verse," or of " Modern Poetry," and leave us out in the cold, though we, too, have been occasionally known to write verse in English, and are supposed to write modern poetry. Now your anthologists may protest till they turn a royal purple, that such a title as " An Anthology of English Verse " means " An Anthology of Verse by Englishmen." It means that to nobody on earth. This is proved by the fact that every such collection contains poems by Scotsmen and Irishmen. What it does mean is, " An Anthology of Verse in the English Language." And that, too, is what " An Anthology of Modern Poetry " means. No one opens such a book with a reasonable expectation of finding poems in Finnish, Italian, or Hindustani.

I am obliged to add, no one opens such a volume, if it is published in England, with much expectation of finding an American poem, either.

Even if your anthologists do not leave us out entirely, they follow the brave example of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and include one or two bits each by Whitman and by Poe, and perhaps one each by the gentlemen so playfully alluded to by Mr. Crowley as barbers' assistants and polecats.

This anthology matter, of course, would be quite all right if your anthologists would only remove the little smattering of Americans, and be courteous enough to call their books what they really are, viz., Anthologies of British Verse, or of Modern British Poetry. It is the omission of that one word British which is causing all the bad feeling.

The lad of twenty-one does not wish to set himself up priggishly as a model of deportment. But I cannot resist pointing out that we, on our side of the water, do not publish anthologies of English Verse or of Modern Poetry, and have all the poems " our own make," excepting perhaps a couple each by Shakespeare and Milton, with Chaucer, Keats, and Browning represented by one apiece.

Neither do your colonies do that sort of thing, so far as I know. If the poems are all home-brewed, we put the word "American" into the title. The only exception to this rule which comes to mind is Miss Rittenhouse's *Second Book of Modern Verse*; and even this bears the sub-title: "A Selection from Contemporary American Poetry."

Another thing, we would not mind so much if those anthologies of "English Verse" and of "Modern Poetry," in which you include only two or three of our poets, were kept consistently up to the level of the best work of Whitman and of Poe. But your anthologists usually include a quantity of British poems, not only below the standard of Whitman and Poe, but also below the level of the best work of our Moody, Robinson, Teasdale, Guiney, Thomas, Hovey, Branch, Lindsay, etc., etc. All we ask here is the same "fair field and no favour" that is the religion of your sport. *A bas* the dual standard!

I have heard some of your literary men object that an anthology which included poetry by all English speaking nations would be too bulky. Not at all! Simply raise the entrance requirements sufficiently, and be as strict with yourselves as you are with us, and you shall have a compact and worth-while volume of pocket size.

You will probably object that such a book would not sell in Great Britain because the only verse you are interested in is your own. That may be true. Please note: the boy who has come of age is not urging you to include him in your anthologies, but simply to give those anthologies titles which may not imply that the only English verse is written on this side of the water, and that you have a monopoly of poetry in our common language.

The other day I was discussing this question with Mr. Edmund Gosse. He said that he did not believe in putting driblets of Whitman, Poe, etc., into British anthologies. The best American poetry, he declared, is so rich and bulky—that it should all be left out.

I am bound to confess that this appealed to me as a new and arresting point of view. If your anthologists could only satisfy us that we have been excluded on the sole ground of our superlative excellence, we might feel much more comfortable in our minds.

At the same time, this line of argument might impress

us American writers more deeply if we had not been already made somewhat familiar with its general style by letters of rejection from our extremely courteous review and magazine editors. For instance, I remember receiving one in my youth from *The Independent*, to the following effect:

Dear Sir,—

This is an admirable essay. It has got a lot of meat in it. It is good enough to accept,—and it is good enough to reject. Therefore, in accordance with our invariable custom, we reject it.

I remember feeling temporarily quite set up by this letter—almost as much as by Mr. Gosse's ingenious reason for casting us out of your anthologies, neck and crop.

We do not question your poetic superiority. But even granting that we are worms of the dust compared with you—it is undeniable that we are beginning to turn. (Let me mix my metaphors!) And we are not turning "the other cheek also," if worms have cheek as well as their oppressors.

Or simply have it, if you please, that the son has come of age and, without pretending to claim full equality, objects to the old man monopolising any longer all the prerogatives of adulthood.

Certainly your average of poetic quality is higher than ours. Anybody can see that at a glance, by comparing British and American anthologies of the same scope by equally able compilers. But is it so much higher that you might not with propriety publish one American poet for every score of British poets we publish; or give some sort of public hearing to one American poet for every score of British poets whom we entertain and crowd to hear?

Your contemporary verse may be half again as good as ours, but surely it is not twenty times as good.

I believe that the spirit of this article represents with fair faithfulness the attitude of American poets toward British poets. If here and there the reader should perhaps detect a faintly pungent, or acid, flavour—even that may be taken as representative. In this day of political agitation for Anglo-Saxon solidarity, why not let the literary world aid harmony, as it should, rather than sow discord, as it does?

Let us get together!

Let the lion lie down with the lamb.

Yes—but this time, not in the traditional manner.

The American literary lamb is tired of *always* lying down inside the British lion.

The other day I saw a sight which made me hope that John Bull is ready to recognise his son's majority. In walking past your National Gallery I noticed that a bronze monument had recently been erected on the otherwise empty grounds before that beloved institution.

Looking more closely, I discovered, to my stupefaction, that this sole occupant of the National Gallery's front yard was an American! There stood George Washington, the man who took your colonies from you, within two stone's throws of that other George, his royal antagonist.

How stunning of you! You have made one of the most superbly sportsmanlike gestures that one nation has ever made to another.

I think it means that you realise your son has matured and that you are glad of it. I think that, in placing the maker of America before your artistic pantheon, you implicitly recognise the coming of age of our national arts.

But if I am too optimistic about this, and you have placed Washington before the National Gallery merely because that was the one site in London still unoccupied by monumental sculpture, allow us to suggest that you offer Messrs. Young and Crowley a year's course in sportsmanship at Queen's; and conscript your anthologists into football teams; and pluck the monocles from the minds of your next batch of poetic missionaries before they embark for the icy mountains of America with a fresh consignment of "wisdom from on high."

The Prophetic Camera

By L. De Giberne Sieveking

THERE were moments in the life of Mr. Muffle when he was glad his wife was not present. She constantly upbraided him for being a "soft-hearted fool."

"We may as well put the shutters up at once," said she, "if every time I leave you alone in the shop you empty the till into the lap of the first person who brings in a piece of good-for-nothing rubbish." But then she was made of harder stuff than he was. On this particular evening he was particularly glad that she had gone off to a sale at Islington and would not be back for some time.

He was too distressed at the appearance of the miserable individual who furtively crept up to the counter to apprise with a businesslike eye the thing which the other set down before him. The miserable-looking man fumbled with one hand on the counter and said:

"What will you allow me on this?"

Mr. Muffle picked up the large old box camera and turned it over once or twice.

"What do you want for it?" he asked.

"What'll you 'llow me?" persisted the other almost inaudibly.

"Three and six," with a shrug of his shoulders, though he felt sure the camera was worth practically nothing.

"Make it five bob."

Mr. Muffle looked from the camera to its owner. He shook his head. The other's face fell.

"'Tisn't really worth half-a-crown, by rights," murmured Mr. Muffle, thinking of his wife's return that evening.

"It's worth a good deal more than that, indeed it is," said the other. "Why, the lens alone——"

Mr. Muffle moved about uneasily and glanced at the clock.

"All right," he said suddenly, and went to his desk to make out the pawn ticket. In another moment the man

had gone, and with him went five shillings which would be very hard to account for.

Luckily Mrs. Muffle was in a good humour when she returned, having bought some old china and glass very cheaply, and merely snorted with a contemptuous little laugh when she saw the camera, and pushed it out of the way among a lot of unsaleable uniforms that had come from men home from South Africa.

* * * * * *

That had been in November. Now it was spring again. The Euston Road was drying up under the hard bright rays of the early May sunlight. Mr. Muffle was standing in the doorway of his shop reading a leading article on Campbell-Bannerman in the *Daily News*. He turned when a voice from behind him called his name. His little nephew, who was staying with them, caught hold of his arm.

"Oh, uncle!" he said, "I shall be going to-morrow, and I forgot to tell you that father made me promise to be sure and not forget to bring back a photo of you and Aunt Mabel."

"Why, Charlie," said his uncle, "me and your aunt ain't had our picture took for nigh on eight years. Your father has seen all those old things."

"Ain't you got a camera?" asked the boy. "Then I could just take a snap in no time."

"Never 'ad a camera in me life," replied his uncle, peering under his hand at the clock on St. Pancras tower.

"What's that?" said his wife's voice from the gloom behind the counter. "Have you forgotten that thing you lent five good shillings of my money for last year? Might as well say 'gave,' for all the chance there is of him ever coming back for it!"

"There you are, Uncle Robin!" cried the boy. "Let's have a look at it."

Mrs. Muffle, muttering to herself, got upon a chair, and reached into a dusty corner. Then she returned to the counter and banged the old camera down on it.

"Look out, aunt! You'll smash the works." Charlie picked it up and carried it out into the light. After blowing the dust off it he had soon pressed the knob which opened the back.

"It'll take quarter-plate," he announced cheerfully.

And then, pressing the bulb, he looked through the lens at the sky.

"Looks all right," he said. "Come on, Uncle Robin, give me a bob and I'll go and buy a packet of plates at the chemist opposite."

"Making six good shillings in all thrown away," observed his aunt sourly.

Five minutes later Charlie was in the cupboard under the counter, carefully sliding the plates into their sockets as well as he could in the dark. Soon he emerged, radiant but rumpled, and ordered his aunt and uncle out into the street. He made them stand together just beneath the three golden balls.

"Put your arm round my neck, Mabel," said Mr. Muffle, with an effort at jocularity, "and pretend we're on our 'oneymoon."

"You button up your coat," said his wife severely, "and smooth your 'air a bit. Then you might look more like a man and less like a cab 'orse."

Poor Mr. Muffle wore a very chastened expression as his nephew pressed the bulb of the old camera.

"Now," said Charlie, as he pulled the knob and dropped the first plate, "now you take one of me. Me and Aunt Mabel together." So saying, he handed his uncle the camera and stood beside his aunt with a perky, self-conscious air.

Mr. Muffle pressed the bulb.

"Now I'll take one of the Euston Road," said he, as a happy thought struck him. "I've often thought I'd like one took just from this very door. But 'ow do you shift the plates?"

His nephew showed him, and they shook the second plate down. He looked through the view-finder and saw a little man talking to a policeman in the near foreground. A hansom cab bowling along towards him, and two horse 'buses drawn up on the further side of the street. The advertisement on the side of the nearer 'bus caught his eye:

"HENRY IRVING IN 'OTHELLO.'"

He pressed the bulb once again, and, turning to the others:

"But who's a-going to develop them?" he asked.

"The chemist over the way," replied his nephew. "I asked him."

"What'll *that* cost?" demanded his aunt sharply.

"Ooo, not much."

Next morning, after breakfast, Charlie went across to the chemist, and returned in a few moments running.

"Look here!" he said, bursting into the parlour. "This *is* a go! It is a funny camera and no mistake. They've come out all wrong. It's took something altogether different!"

"What do you mean?" said his uncle, stretching out a buttery thumb and forefinger. He looked closely at the print for a few moments, and then he jumped up with an exclamation, and, pushing the boy aside, he gazed incredulously at the other two photographs on the table.

"Aunt Mabel!" cried Charlie up the stair. "Aunt Mabel, come quickly. The photos have come out mighty queer. You haven't come out at all! And uncle——"

Soon all three of them were staring in blank amazement. In the first photograph Mr. Muffle was standing against the shop by himself. On his face a placid, comfortable expression which looked completely unfamiliar to him. He had filled out, apparently, and though he looked perfectly well and happy, and very much better dressed, he seemed to have aged considerably. The cut of his coat and the style of his collar and tie struck them as particularly odd. The name over the shop, above his head, was no longer R. Muffle, but E. Watson. Also the three golden balls were no longer to be seen. The second photograph was that of a young man of about twenty-eight, in overalls, with a large spanner in one hand.

"Why! It's you, Charlie!"

"Can't be me. And yet it *do* seem to be like me some'ow." And then, "I say!" in an awestruck tone, "he's lost two fingers off his left hand."

Of the third photograph they could make neither head nor tail at first. It appeared to be of a wide, straight thoroughfare completely unknown to them. There were a large number of odd-looking, small, square vehicles, unlike anything they had ever seen before. In the near foreground was a police inspector talking to a man in a bath chair. On the opposite side of the street there were two omnibuses

without horses, on whose sides was an advertisement which stood out in clear letters:

"BEERBOHM TREE IN 'JULIUS CÆSAR.'"

"Them things," said Mr. Muffle in a bewildered voice, "looks like motor cars, but I'm sure I never seed one that shape before! And what a lot of them! 'Buses, too."

"There's the corner of St. Pancras!" cried his wife, pointing her finger at it. "But whatever's that huge building opposite to it? I never saw *that* before."

"It's the Euston Road," said Charlie.

"Where's that camera?"

Charlie produced it.

Mr. Muffle took it gingerly over to the window of the parlour. Suddenly he gave a little gasp. On the side of the camera was a circle of metal like a clock face, about two inches in diameter. So discoloured was it that it was hardly distinguishable from the faded leather round it. He rubbed it briskly with his sleeve. The other two crowded round him.

"Whatever are all those figures?" said Charlie. "And look, there's a little arrow pointing. You can move it round with your finger."

Mr. Muffle did so.

"I wonder what it's for," he said.

Charlie's face glowed suddenly with inspiration.

"Where was the arrow? What figure was the arrow against when we took the photos?" he asked in a hushed voice.

"Fourteen, I think," said his uncle. And then, "Yes, fourteen."

"Fourteen *years*!" said Charlie.

"What do you mean—years?" said his aunt quickly. "And why didn't I come out in the photos, anyway?"

Something dawned on Mr. Muffle.

"Because you're——" said he, and stopped.

There was a long pause. And then she said, looking at the photograph of her husband:

"But you look so well . . . and happy . . . Robin."

There was a step at the door. Charlie turned and saw the chemist from across the road. He was a cheerful-looking man about thirty-five with a pale moustache.

" Mind if I have another look at those photos I developed? " he asked.

The others said nothing. For a long time he scrutinised the photograph of the Euston Road. Then he picked up the camera and, opening it, he put his hand inside and felt about.

" This arrow in the disc of figures doesn't seem to be connected with anything. Nothing comes through from outside," he said at last.

" It's *impossible*," said Mr. Muffle, with an air of finality.

" Nothing is impossible," said the chemist.

" Well, you developed them," said Mrs. Muffle accusingly.

" But I didn't take them," said the chemist. " And what I want you to let me do is to make a few experiments myself. Now I'll go across to my place and load the camera up full of new plates, and then we'll take six photographs, turning the arrow on five figures each time. Ten—fifteen—twenty——"

" Thirty years," murmured Mrs. Muffle to herself. " I don't believe it. I *won't* believe it! To think you paid five shillings for this—this——"

The chemist returned almost at once with the camera in his hand.

" Come out in the street," he said in an excited voice.

Charlie eyed him open-mouthed. Handing the camera to Mr. Muffle, the chemist said:

" Now you take six photos of me, and turn the arrow to five the first time, ten the next time, and so on."

" Aren't you afraid? " said Mrs. Muffle.

" Not me! " said the chemist, stuffing his hands into his trouser pockets. But for all that his face was pale.

With a trembling hand Mr. Muffle prepared to do as he was asked. But his nephew took the camera from him, saying:

" You can't do it like that, uncle, you're shaking so."

After peering once quickly through the view-finder, Charlie pressed the bulb six times, dropping a plate and turning the arrow on five points between each.

" Right," said the chemist, taking the camera from him. " I shan't be long."

" Isn't there room for us in your dark-room? " asked Mr. Muffle eagerly.

" I say! Yes, *is* there? " chimed in Charlie.

" Come along," said the chemist, and they crossed the road.

" I am sure it can't be right, and I don't believe it, anyway," muttered Mrs. Muffle, turning back into the shop.

However, she was unable to think of anything else. In about a quarter of an hour she locked the front door and followed them across the road to the chemist's shop.

" Where are you? " she raised her voice slightly.

Following the sound of talking which she heard, she went through into the back of the shop. She came to a door which was shut. From the other side of this came the chemist's voice:

" And now the last one," he said, and his voice was full of emotion.

She waited in silence.

Then she heard Charlie say, " It's coming out. You're not there! "

For a long time there was only the sound of the plate clicking against the side of the dish as the chemist tilted it.

" Yes, you *are* there, you're sitting down."

" Hooray! " shouted the chemist. " I'm sixty-five! And don't I look prosperous just? "

The door opened.

" They're fixing," he said on seeing Mrs. Muffle. " I'll show you them in a moment."

" Then it *is* true," she said quietly.

Soon they were all looking at the wet plates as the chemist held them up for a minute to the light before dropping them into clean water. Each one showed him slightly older, and in the third the name over the Muffles' shop had changed to Watson, and the three golden balls had gone. The window was full of books.

" I'm fifty there," said the chemist.

" What I want to know," said Mr. Muffle, " is what I'm doing then, if a chap called Watson has got the shop. Oh, by the way though, I'm fifty-four then. But however did I come to look so rich? "

" It won't be your own doing, you may be sure," said his wife.

The chemist held up the last three one by one.

"And see," he said at the last one, "I'm sixty-five there. I've a good mind to take another six."

"Which would be tempting Providence," said Mrs. Muffle.

"Tempting your grandmother!" he responded cheerfully. "That would only bring me to ninety-four."

"Take a dozen," suggested Charlie facetiously.

"You're a Noptimist!" laughed the chemist.

* * * * * *

That day in the parlour behind the Muffles' shop the four of them could think and talk of nothing else. The chemist was full of tremendous suggestions. At first he was all for advertising the camera's capabilities, and charging so much a head to show people in black and white exactly what their fate would be. And then, on second thoughts he came to the conclusion that it would be better to continue the experiments for a while. For, as Mr. Muffle pointed out, the camera did not really belong to them. The chemist replied that, if ever the owner returned to redeem it, they might buy it from him. No sum appeared to him too large for this purpose.

"Of course, telling people the future . . . well, we can't do it," reflected the chemist.

"That's exactly what we *can* do," said Mr. Muffle.

"No, I mean it's illegal."

And then he went off on the most fantastic flights of imagination.

"We could take photographs of places centuries and centuries ahead, and see exactly what's going to happen. What kind of buildings . . . architecture . . . feats of engineering . . . means of transport . . . people's clothes. Why!" he cried, "we could take a photo of the end of the world!"

"Don't be blasphemous," said Mrs. Muffle. "It would go off bang as a judgment, if you did. Besides, what's all this 'we'? It isn't your camera, as I know of."

"Well, it isn't ours either," interpolated Mr. Muffle.

The chemist judiciously passed this point over.

"It's queer," he went on. "The camera shows us what we're going to become——"

"Of course the camera cannot lie," snorted Mrs. Muffle in parenthesis.

"And perhaps," continued the chemist, "the camera is going to be the means by which we achieve fortune. When we've formed the company . . . Prophecies, Limited . . . or: Forewarned Fore-armed Trust . . ."

"Second Sight Syndicate!" cried Mr. Muffle, fired by the other's enthusiasm.

The chemist got up and strode about the room.

"By a series of photographs taken according to a calculated time and place we shall be able to foretell social changes, evolutions, revolutions, falls of Governments, wars and their results. Can't you see a series of photographs taken in the House of Commons, showing who'll be sitting on what benches ten, twenty, forty years hence? How prices alter from the effect of war! By photographing shop windows with ticketed objects. If the prices on the tickets come out double—treble what they are at present, we shall know that once again England has won a war! We shall be able to go to Prime Ministers and charge them fabulous sums for photographs of the House of Commons Register three years hence."

Mr. Muffle objected.

"What would be the good," he reasoned, "of showing anybody anything? We might show one man how he would die by the hangman's rope, but that wouldn't enable him to avoid it. If it did, the photo wouldn't be true. It would be merely a suggestion as to what might happen. We might demonstrate to any number of people the actual, precise, and detailed result of a revolution that was inevitably going to take place. Famine . . . waste . . . disease . . . rioting. But in so much as it was inevitable, it would 'ave to 'appen, and I'm sure nobody would be any better for the knowing of it. The politicians could change their way of going on as much as they pleased, but if what the camera said was going to 'appen, *was* going to 'appen, what they did would be what they would have done in any case."

The chemist waved him to silence with an exasperated sweep of the arm.

"As if those were the only possibilities," he said. "Think how we might get the whole history of the

world, backwards and forwards from beginning to end!"

"The arrow won't go backwards," said Mr. Muffle. "You can only push it round one way. From nought right round to nought again. Besides which, I'm positive it ain't no good knowing the future unless it's pleasant."

"Well," responded the chemist, "we could take people's photos—at a price—and we could decide when we developed them whether their future was a happy one or not. And if it wasn't, why, we needn't show 'em."

"That would be worse than showing them!" ejaculated Mrs. Muffle. "Then they'd be quite sure it was bad, only they wouldn't know *how* bad it was!"

"Anyway," said the chemist, "whether it benefits me or not, I'm going to know all about the future. I am going to take thousands and thousands of photos. There must be lots of people with money who would be quite willing to pay and never consider whether it would do them any good or not. Think of a photograph of New York or Paris in the year 3000! Perhaps the channel with bridges across it . . . flying machines as big as liners . . . a new kind of animal . . . or even of the Euston Road in five hundred years' time! Why, man! Only think——"

The shop bell rang.

"Run and see what they want, Charlie," said his aunt.

Charlie returned with a pawn ticket and handed it to his uncle.

Muttering that he would not be a moment, Mr. Muffle went into the shop. In answer to an excited shout, the three of them followed him a moment later.

"It's HIM! It's HIM!" said Mr. Muffle, clutching the chemist's arm.

The chemist pulled himself together.

"I've took rather a fancy to your camera," he said to the miserable-looking individual. "How'd you like to sell it me for a reasonable price?"

"I don't want to sell it," replied the other in a sad voice.

"Well," said the chemist a little breathlessly, "what would you say to five pounds? Come, now!"

"I don't want to sell it," repeated the other.

"Wouldn't you sell it—reelly—not at all?" urged Mr.

Muffle, leaning over the counter with his hands clasped and his eyes shining.

" You've got my ticket," said the sad-looking man, " and here's the money. Give me the camera."

" He's perfectly right," said Mrs. Muffle in a firm voice, and she handed him the camera.

" You shut your mouth ! " said the chemist. And then to Mr. Muffle: " We can't—we *mustn't* let it go ! We must make him a partner or something. We must hire it. Look here," he continued, turning to the stranger, " do you know what that camera of yours will do? "

The sad-looking man turned towards them with his hand on the door.

" If you've been using it," he said quietly, " well, you've been using it, that's all. Good afternoon."

He stepped out into the street.

The offer of some vast sum framed itself on Mr. Muffle's silent lips. For a moment they gazed at each other motionless. Then Mrs. Muffle picked up the money and put it in the till. Suddenly the chemist was galvanised into action.

" I must follow him ! " he shouted, and rushed to the door.

He looked wildly up and down the Euston Road, where the heavy afternoon traffic was rumbling by.

But the sad-faced man had disappeared. . . .

Five Model Men

By Horus

(2) The Prime Minister

ALL Prime Ministers are of course premier men, for truly they are of all men the first, representing the current thought and being of their country. They reach this elevation by the supreme virtue of selection. Luck, birth, privilege, wealth—these are not the deciding influences that make a Prime Minister, though they may be contributory; we cannot escape from the thrilling, if curiously bewildering, consequence in a democratic country such as Britain and America that the Prime Minister is about the most representative man of his people of his day, and probably the most characteristic.

Character is in many ways what the Prime Minister stands for: thus Mr. Lloyd George was fastened on as the ideal Premier for war; Mr. Harding in America, *per contra*, was chosen as perhaps the safest man for the peace. The Premier personates the national balance. In times of energy we get a Disraeli; then, when ease and opulence have descended upon the country, the first figure resembles the oak, like Gladstone, or the mulberry-tree, like Salisbury; on the whole, Britain has been fortunate in her Prime Ministers, which of course is another way of saying that Britain is a pretty decent place.

Of such magnificence is the Prime Minister. He is the sublimate of what—we are. If he is a poor Prime Minister, the fault lies with the people who put him there. If he excels, it is that England is ripe and ready. When he shows genius, we are in happy and robust circumstances.

The Prime Minister is thus at once the great egocentric of his people and their *alter ego*. He is both master and servant. Whatever his power of initiation, his sanction is always outside. He is the sanction of the policeman. As the chief expression, so he is the ultimate

behest, of the opinion which set him up. He is the responsible mechanism of democracy.

As such finally he is judged. Popularity is never sufficient; indeed, being an extreme it invariably leads to its opposite, for the fickle mob is the nightmare of the job. The man, however strong, no matter what his services, is weighed eventually on the scales of government or mechanism, and across that measurement personality breaks into the relativities. It smashed Bismarck. It crushed ex-President Wilson. It threatens to-day to convulse Mr. Lloyd George. There is a limit, that is all. The law is change. Democracy is jealous of its rights—to love and hate, to cheer or execrate, to crown or decapitate, and only the sort of man who represents the dull average on balance can hope to rise and fall with the vicissitudes and tempestuous fortunes of the body politic. The question of the Prime Minister is then always government.

So long as he can govern, no matter what mistakes he may commit, Parliament and opinion are his. In normal conditions he is the apex and fulcrum of allegiances which formerly were clearly defined and representatively co-ordinated, thus Parliament, the Press, and the People, but practically the control resided in Parliament. The system worked so admirably that it undermined itself, so much so that long before the war Parliament with its admirable exclusiveness was losing touch with the pulse of the people, who, in turn, having become literate, found their new vehicle of expression in the newspapers, every year rapidly arrogating to themselves the prerogative of the old Upper House. It was largely the neglect to move with the spirit of this evolution that led to Mr. Asquith's descent. He was essentially a Parliamentary Premier, whereas the sanction of government was passing more and more to the Press, and so the moment the question of government became, through war, of vital importance, outside opinion proved far too powerful for the machine, and in the hurricane Mr. Lloyd George stepped in for the people. He seemed to incarnate the fighting spirit. He was the man to get things done; the flag, the cataract of energy. He blew in, so to speak, fighter and autocrat, and all means lay at his disposal.

And now once more change is upon us. The fighting

is over. The autocrat's part is accomplished. Entirely new conditions confront the country of unprecedented scope, difficulty, and danger, and the crisis is one of government. We do not seem to possess the mechanism of the kind of new government necessary. The Parliament is a spent emotion, static and featureless. Government is still mainly a war machine. Parties are groping for policies and leaders. Only the Press is coherent, mainly by virtue of its irresponsibility. The Prime Minister, to-day enmeshed in such conditions, is caught between the past and the present, between the drag and thrust of rival interests, politics, aims, and circumstances, unable any longer to represent where all is unrepresentative, in decay, in tumult, in process of disintegration and reconstruction, and the only appeal left is personal. The Coalition has lost its glamour. Triumphant only is disillusionment. Methods have rebecome the searching question, the how to get the needful and right things done—the problem is the mechanism of government. The present Prime Minister's problem is the nation's problem: can, as Bernard Shaw puts it, " anyone govern? "

If not, why of course someone will, that is the obvious answer, but it is not sufficient: diagnosis must go deeper an we are to find a true prognosis. And when we probe for the cause of this governmental crisis we find no difficulty in locating the seat of the evil, which is not really method, for method is always adaptable, but direction: we don't know where we are because we don't know whither we are going, and we don't because, owing to war, opinion and the operators of opinion gave up thinking. Ever since 1914 we have practically left the business of government to the Government, those who did not approve being physically silenced. During the war years the only criticism of government was the incentive to more government, culminating in the Hip! Hip! mandate of 1918, since when the country, having deprived itself of the right of criticism, has lost its faculty for criticising. Yet it is not really the Government that is now found out so much as the country which has found itself out. It is the sanction which is in need of a change. The crisis is thus primarily national, which is the beauty of the democratic form. Its Government is impersonal; men attack it as such of right,

by virtue of the Constitution, contrary to the formula of kingship based on the law of continuity according to which when one died the next one automatically lived. The Coalition's difficulty to-day is that its 1918 trajectory was wrong, absurd, anything you please, and to-day we know it. The Government knew it years ago, but the masses didn't, that is the difference. The crisis is just that. The Coalition, unknown to the people, has gone ahead of the people, and for that reason, just because it is to-day as intelligent as before it was unintelligent, it will have to go to make way probably for a dull Government whose chief concern it will be to fall astern of the people and solemnly and sententiously to mark time till Labour is ready or out of the regroupings a Centre emerges capable of blasting a way through to responsibility.

The Prime Minister thus becomes the very theory of government. He can do anything provided his mechanism is right, he can do nothing when his mechanism is out of gear. Mr. Asquith in his day completely governed because he was master of his Parliament; Mr. Lloyd George has been master both in and out of Parliament, yet to-day, though undisputed master of the House, he no longer controls outside, for the clear reason that his Parliament is no longer of the people and the very mechanism of Parliamentary representation is creaking, is recognised as no longer adequate. Perhaps that is England's question. Formerly, representation was selective; a class voted in a class with the help of the others, assisted by a class Press. It functioned like, and for much the same purpose as, the public schools. All that has changed. An enormous women electorate now holds the balance, and as yet no man knows the key. The appeal is directly to the masses, like the modern newspaper. Quality, which was the old requisite, has yielded to quantity; it is, to quote Bernard Shaw again, Titus Oates and Horatio Bottomley who knock at the door, and with our present machinery obviously they, as the spell, will hold the future. The platform is the thing, not the programme, least of all principle. Reason cannot compete. The man with the voice and the manner, he who can put it across, more and more that is the type that will enter Parliament, for it is form that the herd appreciates. Matter is secondary. Even parties are

succumbing to the tyranny of form and are less and less able to move on motives of principle; the man and the cry convince, orchestrated by an irresponsible Press whose politics are personalities.

The Coalition has probably killed our present popular franchise, not because it has destroyed the party system, but because the franchise is unable to give the nation the Parliament that it wants or the control that constitutionally is necessary to ensure its reasonable functioning. A "hang the Kaiser" Parliament cannot—cannot be asked to—construct, as the country has discovered. Yet because of it peace in Europe has failed dismally; hundreds of thousands have died as its direct consequence, millions are out of work, tens of millions of real gold standard capital have been thrown down the waste-pipe of "paper" and sheer trading loss, and Europe has been reduced to bankruptcy. A victory election produced a myth, that is all, impossible under the old conditions of representation, inconceivable in the days of Wellington, whose post-Waterloo action shines out to-day in comparison with all our post-war achievements as a miracle of enlightened and creative statecraft.

The reason is mechanism. Wellington did not have to bother about what the at that time illiterate masses thought ought to be done to Napoleon or to France. In those days his butler, Mr. Brown, and Miss Perkins were inarticulate. He was free to act like a gentleman—he happened to be a gentleman. He had definite standards—of honour, of class, of policy, of military expediency, of national tradition and law—to live up to, and he acted upon principles governing both thought and action. He proved himself to be the ideal victory Prime Minister. But in 1918 the mechanism controlled. To get back, politicians had to inflame emotions, not stimulate reason, and they were mortally afraid of the soldiers. Now once again the mechanism threatens. To get back this time, they must needs stimulate reason, which alas! no longer functions; cannot function on a mob appeal; dare not even be resorted to; would actually scarcely be understood if the attempt were made.

In such circumstances the polity of an ideal Prime Minister seems a forlorn venture. Thus Mr. Lloyd George has outlived his cohesions. The very idea of the nation,

the sovereign machine which can do no wrong, which can commit almost any crime and injustice under the intoxication of its own momentum without the people being in the least conscious of the evil that it is conniving at, this also is on trial, and perhaps the most disturbing revelation of the Great War has been this signal and awful failure of the victorious democratic groupings to show any higher moral or political motive than that actuating the defeated groupings even on the war-propaganda assumption that the enemy fought purely for tyranny, whereas we struck impersonally for liberty. Democracy in peace has shown no inspiration, not even common sense. In France, the land of " liberty, equality, and fraternity," the peace attitude is one of sheer militarism and the only refrain *Vae victis*, forgetful of the fact that the white world fought for and saved France in the pious belief that her civilisation was superior at least in moral justice and humanity to that of the enemy. To-day, all illusion has been swept aside. A disgraceful peace so economically stupid that three years later the world yawns at all reference to it, so politically evil that out of it a cycle of wars seems the predestined and legitimate issue, has left us without the mechanism of adjustment or amendment, as the Turkish crisis has revealed to an utterly war-weary public. Democracy is stripped to the bone. It implies herd invocation, herd representation, herd values, quantitive government, and apparently the only corrective is another tyranny, benign, autocratic, socialist, anarchic or " ergatocratic," to use the latest neologism on the latest remedy.

It is a common thing to-day to hear men say " we bar politics," as if politics was an abstract phenomenon, like a ghost or a new Christian denomination. That is new in England. It means that men are tired of the futility of discussing a vain thing, as they are tired of attempting to get results in a game the whole purpose of which is to avoid results. Civilisation's question is Nationalism. The idea of the nation leads inevitably to war. The idea of the State leads inevitably to tyranny. Both are suspect and rejected by men. Retribution faces us from a system which denies the flow of living human relationship. Man alone remains, the will and conscience of man—his truth. With that weapon he must needs arm himself for the cause of

common deliverance under the ensign of humanity. The nation *versus* other nations spells death and all know it. Our Governments and Parliaments mean mob sanctions and we all know it. The dawn of Internationalism appears. The problem of Europe is the whole—whither? Into the jaws of death, or what?

A Prime Minister to-day is thus confronted with a stupendous task. His props and stays are falling from under him; his mechanism of sanction is awry; his authority is the personal implication. Instead of things, he has to consider personalities. In lieu of principle, his motives are derived from political psycho-analysis. His policy becomes opportunism. His vane is self-preservation. France has afforded a curious example of the way the thing works from Clemenceau to Poincaré, each Premier falling through failure to catch his own shuttlecock, to be supplanted by one who could. We don't fluctuate with the same volatility here, but we are getting near to that condition; certainly if the mob liked it could engineer Ministerial crises here as frequently as they occur in France. Our stability is thus an asset. The model Prime Minister would not forget it. The real point, however, is not the crisis, but the negativism produced by the conditions, and here there is not much to choose in results as between France and ourselves—on balance.

The chief difficulty of any Prime Minister now will be how to get back to realities, how to reaccustom the people to truth, how to subordinate emotionalism to reason, seeing that facts are facts and we are nearing the time when, if we are to endure, they will have to be faced. To-day, almost every public question is treated as propaganda, and it is not easy to see how we are going to return to an opinion formed upon fact as distinct from that inspired by illusion. Yet such must be a Prime Minister's business even in his own despite. But the real lacuna is Parliament. It has ceased to inspire. It no longer controls the public purse. It has sunk to a mere appendage of the Executive, hardly even critical. Equilibrium can only be revived by some restoration of Parliamentary authority, and this is the very thing that the mechanism is able to control—negatively. The model Prime Minister would undoubtedly look around for some reform of Parliamentary representation capable

of beating the machine at the elections, which to-day is an impossibility. One thinks of Proportional Representation; better still, one sees vocational representation, which surely must eventually come.

Changes of this kind are imminent and unavoidable. A land where things cannot be discussed with some relation to fact is not likely to survive in the long run, still less to rule as the greatest of all known empires, which axiom the wise Premier would commend to his people, for that is the condition of England. The question of how to re-acquire the conditions permitting the presentation and understanding of truth presents, no doubt, serious difficulties, for the public is sublimely ignorant of the deception practised upon it and regards its mechanism as the last word in democratic freedom, not realising that from its very ignorance it, the public, is its own gaoler. The temptations to use and abuse this authority are great, and the greater because they are unseen. The tangible is so easily controlled by the intangible. And that is the trouble. If emotion is the instrument, the invocation must be popular. On a twelve million electorate blood of some description will be the argument. Fancy the consternation were the next electoral cry to be "No annexations and no indemnities!"—which is what a League of Nations means, if it means anything. Or even this relatively simple one: "Permit us to talk economics non-politically!"

Could Wellington be resuscitated, he might do it. Gladstone would probably attempt it. Possibly, the sheer audacity of a home-truth might electrify the country and an ideal Premier would risk it. For the sake of his country, whose first citizen he is. For the sake of the civilisation of which he is trustee. For the sake of the life to be that lies in his keeping.

The real power of the Premier in a country where authority is detested lies in his right to inspire and settle our *conversation*, conversation being of the essence of the democratic spirit, and it is that function which the Coalition has perforce neglected. Perforce, because a Coalition means implicit authority. Hence in great part the reaction. The Cabinet system has gone, thus severing the link between the legislative and the executive, causing here an impotent Parliament, there a suspicious and restless public.

And there is no opposition. In short, we are governed according to authority which is alien to the spirit of the people. Rule is in the hands of wire-pullers. The supposition of power resides anywhere but in the people. Literally, the only check is the outside revolutionary reserve of the Baronial Press. The tentacula of a bureaucratic secretariat constitute the *de facto* sovereignty. In such conditions the constitutional redress is the party system.

Faced with these imponderabilia, the ideal Premier would not hesitate. He would realise the home necessity of returning to conversation on the lie of facts, as abroad the necessity too is of conference. The stumbling-block is mechanism. The whole party question is one of conversation, and it is the absence of it which retards the re-formation of groupings which alone can restore an intelligent public opinion. As an instance, take Mr. McKenna's speech in New York, which created such a sensation. Had a Minister so spoken the effects would have been world-wide. Why is it left to an outsider to talk national common sense? The answer furnishes the clue to our political predicament. A Coalition cannot talk: it dictates. Now an English Government that cannot direct conversation cannot govern in peace, and that is why the power of government in Britain to-day has passed to the Press.

What an opportunity! Of course, life is opportunity, and the Premier should be its apothecary. His workshop is talk. If it is intelligent talk, his balance is assured, but if the talk outside is nearer to facts and necessities than the talk of the directorate—and it is—disintegration must ensue, and a Coalition has no reserve. So we stand to-day. A bewildered country now wants Parliament to talk and inform, but it cannot; it was elected to register. It wants Ministers to talk and inform—they cannot; they are afraid of eating the dreadful nonsense they uttered in the past. It wants to talk and inform itself, and again it cannot; it does not know what to talk about or how to begin, so long has been its abstention from intelligent participation in the direction of public affairs. Thus the smash would seem the only way out to reconstruction.

To sum up. The idea of the nation *versus* nations, of the sovereign State, of representation by street clamour, all three are in the melting-pot, and in addition the very

economic mechanism is in peril. The idea of the Prime Minister can no longer be the permanence of Ministry or the interest of mechanism, which already resides elsewhere —in the ultimate will of the great herd instinct which is reputed to be always right. It is a thoroughly healthy sign that the people want to talk again, to get a talking Parliament, to thrash things out, to return to the form, which is also the genius, of their own Constitution. The nation wants to recover its sense and character, to feel itself, as it were. The ideal Prime Minister would encourage this ache in his " multiverse." His responsibility is to his country. The performed years of the pre-war capitalist civilisation are drawing to a close and a new order has become necessary, one which is not founded on the "justice" of competition, whether national, which means war, or economic, which means degradation and decay. A new, or rather a true, science of life is needed, and it will arise out of the ruins of the Great War. The land, the people's right to the products of the earth—the new rights of credit—these will be the fighting issues in the unperformed years before us, in which Man will justify his creation in the unceasing toll of evolution. A Prime Minister who remains deaf to the reverberations around him and blind to the spirits emerging out of the mists has committed his soul to his own winding-sheet. To-day, a world's system rocks. The call is to the artists—the true men of life, the creators, and their eternal message is—Truth. Who more suitable than the Prime Minister to administer it! Who more chosen to light the bonfire of conversation in the land and give the truth a chance! Who, after all, more responsible before history for the bitter consequences of withholding it!

Gilbert Pinion

(A Study in Persecution-mania)

A Fragment from one of the future Volumes of the "Old England" Series

By Bernard Gilbert

If I stand here by the gate I shall be bound to see *that fellow*, because on market days he always disguises himself as a farmer and will come along presently. Oh! I shall know him; he can't escape me; though you never know what he will look like next, and only an eye trained by art and inspired by true patriotism can pierce his manifold pretences. On ordinary days anyone can spot him in his shabby tweed clothes and felt hat with peacock's feather, bottle-green tie, and those liver-coloured boots that he has to wear because all the spies in Barkston county wear them, and that's one of the signs of the Great Conspiracy. HE knows very well I've spotted him and means to dispose of me as soon as he can safely, indeed if I hadn't kept a keen look-out he'd have done it long ago, but a special Providence looks after the true-born English, who are the lost ten tribes of Israel. HE is cunning enough and gets at everyone. Fancy Lucinda Munks giving way to him: a respectable Baptist! but she had no chance, for he does just as he likes with women, old or young, married or single, by his hypnotism. One glance of his ferrety eye and all is over! He's bribed her now to put chemicals in my paints so that the pictures come out wrong, and whatever I do it's always the German colours stand out.

As if that wasn't enough, she lets him into the house at night or else has given him a key to the back door, I'm not sure which; but he gets in and goes down to the cellar, where she never lets ME go—you may be sure—though I've tried often enough, and where HE keeps his Electrical Device. For three weeks he's been giving me shocks in bed, and last night twice running I was thrown clean out on to the floor; but my time is coming! I'm tracking him down, day by day, bit by bit, step by step! The foulest

conspiracy ever broached in Old England will be unmasked at the right moment and the Union Jack shall wave supreme on the breeze. If he hadn't nobbled Noah Jefferson my course would be simplicity itself, but that superintendent as well as the magistrates are hand in glove with him, and all the policemen have orders to shut their eyes when *that fellow* is up to his tricks, as I found out the very first time I tried to get that red-headed constable to arrest him when he was practising his hypnotism on a young girl near Greener's. He laughed at me and told me it wasn't the First of April, but I saw he'd been got at, and left off trying. Oh, it's an all-powerful conspiracy and half Bly's in its toils. I see the German colours everywhere as I walk about: in their faces, clothes and speech, and the way they swing the left foot across the right when they stand talking to each other. That's the real sign, and you can tell one of them at any time by it, for they get so used to it that they can't stop, however they try. I noticed it first in Watson Tyler, of Low Barnet, who robbed me of my motor before the war, though I never guessed then what was afoot, and I've *no doubt* but that they did away with him because they thought he was going to betray them.

There's Bannister Hides! He got the Manor away from our family when father died and is one of the gang, of course; and there comes my wicked nephew Laurence, who poisoned his father—my own brother—to get the Priory. There's a whole nest of 'em at Fletton and I wouldn't go near it for a fortune, for I shouldn't get away alive again if I was so foolish. Lawyer Ferrett's one of their chiefs and so is Albert Mervyn. The *Morning Post* says the Jews are always plotting, and they know; but the traitors shall be uprooted when our day dawns.

There! There! One of the artfullest of the gang! Pretending to be a drover and watching me out of his eye-corner as he talks to William Wynn, who's another, or he wouldn't be with him. Disguising himself in an old smock and carrying that drover's stick, as if I shouldn't see through it! He never takes his eye off me with that sideway look they're taught in Berlin, but if I went across and spoke to him he'd turn away, and it's no use, for you must catch them red-handed when the moon's rising. I'm going to paint a great picture of the whole gang, and it

shall be photographed and put up outside all post offices and churches, so that honest folk will know them at sight, especially *that fellow* who seduces all the girls and makes them worse than himself. He was at it this very morning in Narrow Bridge Street, trying to hypnotise a respectable-looking girl out of one of the offices, and when he'd gone I went up and warned her most politely, but she only laughed and pretended he was one of the assistants from the post office and said I was intoxicated. But I can lip-read, and had followed what he was saying to her all the time, though once he's had a word with a woman there's no trusting her, and you never know where he hasn't been. I hadn't the faintest idea he'd been tampering with Lucinda Munks till one day I caught her twirling her left foot as she was quarrelling with the postman; but then I knew. Only this morning she tried to poison me at breakfast with a sausage which looked all right, but instinct saved me, as always, and I said I'd have an egg, because they can't tamper with eggs without leaving a mark on the shell, so she ate the sausage herself, guessing that I knew what had happened, to show me it was all right, as if I didn't know she'd taken an antidote before she put a morsel to her lips, nipping into the scullery to " fetch the mustard " on purpose! I said nothing, for what's the use, and you can't be rude to women, as father used to say. What a blessing I never married her, though she's begged me on her knees time and again, and only last Friday night came into my bedroom at twenty-five past eleven without a stitch of clothing on and slipped into my bed before I heard her! I spoke sharply, but she wouldn't go, and when I tried to push her out twined her legs round mine, so that I had to carry her just as she was back into her own bed.

Of course, *that fellow* was watching all the time through one of the loopholes that he has all over the house, hoping to take my character away, and the whole thing must have been planned by him, so that I really can't blame the wretched woman, who didn't say a word about it the next morning. But I heard the milkman talking to her in low tones before I was up, and when I crept to the window he was *swinging his left foot in a circle* and laughing in a most sinister fashion. I hesitated whether to drop my water-jug on his head and rid the world of a scoundrel,

but refrained; and am glad now, because it's never wise to show children the unfinished picture or spring the mine before the eggs are hatched.

That " drover " is telling Wynn about me and they're keeping me spotted, though they're pretending to be looking at a cow with a calf, but if I went over and said, " I'm a Special Constable and demand to know what you're saying to each other in German cipher," they'd swear they didn't know a word of the lingo; and you can't get anyone to help or even to listen. All unbelieving—well—except Doctor North, with whom I had a good talk last week when he called to ask the price of half a dozen of my water-colours for his dining-room, saying his patients liked blue ones best, as that didn't excite them. I told him I'd do a set specially for them as soon as this GRAVE DANGER had passed. He asked me all about it and I told him everything, as he is the first man I've talked to since I got on the track who didn't begin to laugh as soon as I explained WHO and WHAT was at the back of it all. He was entirely sympathetic and listened for three hours, appreciating the frightful seriousness of the situation, agreeing with my explanation about the vipers' nest up at Herries St. James, where that cannibal-murderer Hulme has a concrete platform ready to set up the Electrical Destructor and overwhelm Bly at one discharge when they're ready. The only thing to do is to send a squadron of our planes from Worlby and blow the whole village across the Skirth, for not one of them, old or young, is untainted. Cobras can kill a man as soon as they're hatched, and it's the same with that lot up in those Wolds. They must be uprooted and not one stone left upon another.

Doctor North is going to London on a secret mission next week and said if I would draft out a full account of everything he'd present it to the Prime Minister with his own hand and tell him that it was the work of a sterling patriot of an old county family who could be relied on to the last drop of his blood. I've nearly finished the Account, taking eighty-three pages of foolscap in small writing on both sides, and only the diagrams left to complete. They're the most important, because there's not only the Electrical Detector and Destructor that *that fellow* shocks me with in bed, but the device of the Illuminated Disc, with which

he summons his confederates, wherever they may be, and lastly the terrible Vacuum Whirler, which will defeat us altogether if they're allowed to complete it. By turning its handle rapidly from right to left whilst holding their breath they can compress the vitals of every man whose name is in their Black Book, and all our generals, admirals, bishops, the King, the Royal Family, the Lords and Commons and the War Office—all, all will be compressed until their brains ooze out of their eye-sockets and ear-holes, forced by the irresistible Vacuum Whirler!

By the mercy of Providence I picked up the draft plan in the street and copied it before I replaced it again—so that they should not be forewarned—and when I went the next day, it had gone! I am putting all this in my Account, and when it's finished the Doctor will have it copied and take the original to Whitehall. He has set on four private detectives to trail *that fellow*: men from Barkston whom he can trust absolutely, having trained them from youth—two by day and two by night—so that HE won't interfere with me for the present; though when I offered to share in the expense he refused, saying my part was to prepare the full Account of the vile plot and that I should be thanked publicly by Parliament, and the full-length portrait of myself that I did three years ago would be hung in the Public Library with a suitable inscription to the "Saviour of Bly." After all, it's as an artist that I would go down to posterity and not as a detective—important though that be at the moment.

It's really harrowing to trace the ramifications of this conspiracy! The Churches are all in it: Canon Makepeace and Father Welby are two of the worst, meeting in the Freemasons' chapel, and everybody knows what goes on when they get together and lock themselves in so that NO SOUND can come out and no screams, however dreadful, be caught! It's not for nothing that they have no outside windows to their unholy chamber and drink each other's blood.

Ha! At last! There HE is! Disguised as Aaron Toynbee, of Pantacks. I wonder what he's done with Aaron's body? That's one of his girl victims driving the car and pretending, no doubt, to be Mrs. Toynbee. Poor Aaron! I owe him no grudge, though he did push me

into the canal one night when his lights were out. A coarse, hulking brute, but not deserving such a fate as this! How wonderfully he's got up! No one would ever guess, and p'raps that is Aaron's wife, after all, and doesn't know what's happened, for as soon as he had two words with her she'd be hypnotised and no use. Shall I walk quietly past and slit his back tyre with my penknife whilst he's stopped? But he would only summon his confederates by the illuminated disc and fall upon me, and I promised Doctor North not to expose myself until the Account was safely in his hands, or it might have been best to spring forward and throttle him before anyone could come to his rescue. No! I must keep my promise! Ha! Just what I thought! That " drover " has gone to him with the secret sign and is telling him that I'm here behind the urinal. They're both looking my way now and I'd better be off, or I may be drawn into something. How mad HE looks. Probably the " drover " has told him about my putting strips of rubber under my chair-legs and the feet of the bed, as the Doctor suggested, because rubber's a non-conductor of electricity and will defeat their hellish machinations. What's more, they won't be able to see the Account I'm writing by the Detector, though the Doctor says that as soon as it's gone to London they'll know by reason of having spies in every Government office and even the palaces; and that my life THEN won't be worth a second's purchase. I must go then, he says, and stay with him until the whole gang is rounded up and safely in the Tower of London; for he has armed guardians in his grounds by day and night, and so, I daresay, I shall have to take his advice.

The Doctor is bringing another medical man, a staunch patriot, to see me on Tuesday, when I'm to hand over the Account; and this other doctor, who's coming over from Barkston on purpose to be a witness, will assist in guarding the Account after it's passed out of my hands. Yes, I daresay I'd better take his advice then and go and carry on the anti-spy organisation from the White House, which is full of lunatics, poor creatures, for no one would suspect what I'm up to when I'm there.

HE's gone; and I'll go, too, and patrol the market-place until midday, when something may turn up. . . .

THEATRE-CRAFT
Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

The Ober-Ammergau Myth

By Hermon Ould

THE Ober-Ammergau Passion Play will not be played again for ten years. In view of the desperate financial circumstances of the simple people who are responsible for this most famous of Passion plays, I should have hesitated to say anything which might have militated against the success of the venture this year; but there can be no harm in telling the truth about it now that it is over, thereby helping to dispel a myth which has become so sacred that even those who are ordinarily dogmatic seem to question their own judgment.

Owing to a disorganised Austrian train service, I arrived too late for the morning session, but I sat through the four hours' afternoon session of the penultimate performance. I had come prepared for one of two possibilities. Having heard so much of the fabulous sums which Anton Lang had been offered to play the part of the Christus in America, and having seen throughout England and abroad the evidence of a publicity campaign so extraordinarily effective that it argued a business man of no little ability at the head of the concern, I feared that the whole thing might be a commercial venture, in which thoroughly efficient theatre-artists would " put up " a performance that would stand comparison with the *Chu-Chin-Chows* and *Gardens of Allah* of the ordinary theatre.

Alternatively, I hoped that the efficient advertising campaign was the work of enterprising travel-agencies and that the Passion Play itself would be a true example of peasant art, presented with the charm and simplicity of the mediæval mysteries.

The event proved me wrong in both of my conjectures.

One thing is quite clear, namely, the complete sincerity

of those who take part in the play; and whoever makes money out of the venture, it is not they. For 100 marks I had secured a seat in the middle of the auditorium. A hundred marks was less than fourpence. The charges for accommodation in the little town are extraordinarily low, and advantage is not taken of the valuta to "rook" foreign visitors. These facts, in face of the clamorous demands of wealthy but ticketless tourists, vainly vying with one another for the privilege of buying a standing-place at almost any figure, must be taken as evidence of sincerity. There is no doubt whatever that another performance of the play could have been given and the great auditorium filled by travellers who would have paid a hundred times as much as the prices asked for admission.

These things, coupled with the apparent simplicity of the chief actors whom one saw about the picturesque old town—I drank Bavarian beer in the old inn with Saint Peter the night before the performance!—encouraged the hope that the morrow would offer me an example of folk art transmitted undefiled from the fount of mediæval faith. Disillusionment came with the first sight of the pseudo-classical stage. Nothing remotely resembling folk art here! The built-up auditorium-arch, side entrances, and secondary stages were painted imitations of Renaissance architecture, with Michael-Angelo-like statuary painted in relief on the front drop-scene. The scenes visible through the side entrances were of canvas painted in perspective. All these artificialities were shown up for the make-believe they were by the splendid reality of sky and mountains beyond—for the stage was open to the light of day. I stress this first impression because in a way it summarises the reasons which deny to Ober-Ammergau the right to call its play "folk" art, or even art without an adjective. The absurdity of allowing painted canvas and pictorial perspective to compete with real trees, hills, and a changing sky would immediately have struck an artist sensitive to the incongruous; while it would never have occurred to an unlearned peasant to imitate the dignities of the Renaissance and the sculptures of the great Italians.

The manner of presentation is tedious and lacking in continuity. The scenes are not only divided by the narrative and choruses, but by Old Testament "tableaux

vivants " that might be based on those coloured oleographs which disfigured the walls of Sunday-schools twenty years ago—and may still fulfil the same function for all I know! The method employed is the method of realism. We are spared none of the painfulness of the Gospel story. The crown of thorns is pressed brutally into the head of Christ and imitation blood trickles down His face; a spear is pressed into His side, and gash and blood follow the action. The bones of the crucified thieves are broken with as faithful a semblance of reality as it would be possible to imagine, and their limp bodies are removed from the crosses with a brutality which sets one's teeth on edge. Nothing is left to the imagination.

The acting is, on the whole, quite good. The Christus of Anton Lang is a figure of dignity and discretion, a thought too heavy; Judas, as interpreted by Guido Mayr, is a vigorous if unsubtle creation, and the rest of the characters are capably played. The crowds are often effectively handled in a conventional way, and the mob which calls for the release of Barabbas and the death of Christ would have been impressive if it had not been so completely unanimous in its articulation. The cry of " To the Cross with Him! " and other phrases, uttered by the whole crowd with the precision of a metronome, became almost ludicrous.

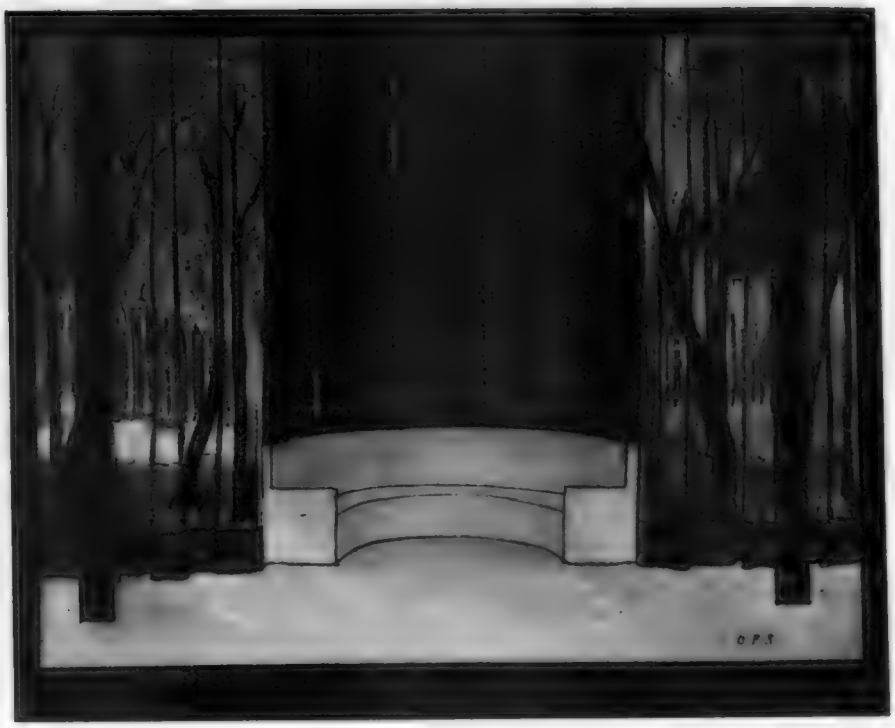
Judged as an act of devotion, it is doubtful if the religious emotion extends far beyond those who take part in the play. The applause which instinctively followed the chorus at the conclusion of the play was evidence that the huge audiences had regarded it as a theatrical performance pure and simple. I was reminded, by contrast, of the Passion Play given by the Monks of Caldey Abbey during the Feast of Corpus Christi this year—a performance in which art was so inseparably wedded to religion that the impulse to applaud was infinitely remote.

Judged by the folk art of the old mysteries—*Everyman* and the *Chester Moralities*, for instance—the play is heavy, unimaginative, and pretentious. The music has moments of vigour, but for the most part is a feeble imitation of the oratorios of Händel and Haydn; the orchestra is hardly to be regarded seriously, and the singing is curiously lacking in every quality but that of being in tune.

Setting by Paul Shelving for The Immortal Hour, Act I (Rutland Boughton).
(Regent Theatre, London.)

Setting by Paul Shelving for The Immortal Hour, Act II (Rutland Boughton),
(Regent Theatre, London.)

Setting by Owen P. Smyth for
Twelfth Night, Act I.
(The Maddermarket Theatre,
Norwich.)



Setting by Owen P. Smyth for
King Monmouth (John Presland)
(The Maddermarket Theatre,
Norwich.)

Light and shade of tone and feeling were conspicuously wanting.

Judged by the standards of the best modern theatre work, the production is negligible: it is dull, without thrill, except the cheap thrill provided by the brutality which has been referred to. One conjures up a vision of what Reinhardt or Granville Barker would have made of this concourse of two thousand actors and such a subject, and one sighs.

Ober-Ammergau's Passion Play, in a word, falls between two stools. It has no value as a contribution to culture, for it offers nothing that has not been better done on the boards of an ordinary theatre; and it has no value as "folk" art, for it is not the direct utterance of a simple group of the unlettered expressing their faith in unself-conscious *naiveté*, but the work of intelligent and (in a sense) well-read people imitating the art of the picture-books of twenty or thirty years ago.

The Immortal Hour.

WHEN Rutland Boughton's *The Immortal Hour* was produced at the Old Vic., some of us, who had known it in its Glastonbury days, wondered if our enthusiasm for the music had led us astray, so unconvincing was that performance. Fortunately, the Birmingham Repertory Company is giving us another opportunity of seeing it, adequately produced, at the Regent Theatre. Even this production has its flaws (chiefly flaws of excess), but it is, on the whole, a carefully planned and well-executed piece of work. Mr. Paul Shelving's setting for the first scene is as good as we could wish for: mystery and the sense of aloofness from the world of actuality are well conveyed. The last scene is most satisfactory when it is not peopled. Individually the costumes are often very fine, but it was only rarely that the grouping pleased. The actors had the courage to accept the pace of the drama; when no action was implicit in the text, they remained almost static and refrained from unnecessary gesture. Their enunciation was unusually clear and even the words of the choruses were intelligible. (The unaccompanied chorus "off" might be provided with a discreet pitch-pipe to counteract the inevitable slipping of half a tone.)

If the play attracts the general public, as I hope it may, it will be by the charm of the music rather than by the strength of the libretto. The first scene (which happens to contain some of the finest music) is far too long. It is in the nature of a philosophic prologue and is long enough to precede a whole cycle of music-dramas. The two subsequent scenes are not nearly full enough to carry the weight of this portentous opening. It is a pity that Mr. Boughton, having decided to adapt Fiona McLeod's drama, was not more drastic in the use of the blue pencil. Evidently it was not excessive reverence which stayed his hand, since he has not hesitated to incorporate unrelated lyrics in the text of his play; and if something could have been done to develop the dramatic theme, the audience (which cannot be blamed for unfamiliarity with Celtic legends and their philosophic implications) would not have been so utterly bewildered. But it may be hoped that the public will be persuaded to swallow the story undigested for the sake of the music, at once so musicianly and melodious, pleasing to highbrow and lowbrow alike, which holds it together.

Economics and Experiments

By Horace Shipp

In the distressing dearth of such mad monarchs as Ludwig of Bavaria the English theatre is primarily a happy or unhappy hunting-ground for the speculator, where playhouses and good, bad, or indifferent art take their places as commodities alongside such higher game as Argentine meat and Anglo-Persian oil. This subjection to the rigid laws of economics means that the work presented is governed not by the artist's "Is it good?" but by the stockbroker's "Will it pay?" To this standard is brought everything which claims place in the theatre: the building itself, the play, the work of every actor and actress, the decoration—these things are goods, bought and sold, bidden for, exploited, advertised and supplied only in response to a sufficient and profitable demand. I am not concerned at the moment with the effect of this upon the progress of theatre art, its obvious reactions upon public taste, nor with the strange experiences of any genuine artist or writer who mistakes the English stage for a platform for his work. Let it be granted that in the present state of English culture there are an enormous number more stupid people than intelligent ones, and far more indifferent playgoers than critical, and it follows logically that an existence depending upon the suffrage of the greatest number is hardly likely to be dedicated to the best, nor to assist materially in moulding contemporary thought and feeling. These finer points of æsthetics and public good aside, however, one is concerned with the economics of the theatre as such; with its important position as a business providing livelihood for many thousands of people and catering for the amusement of millions. And one realises how viciously post-war conditions are operating.

The selling price of seats has remained static save for the debilitating entertainment tax with which the Government has saddled an institution which it has never done

anything to assist—a penalising of theatre-going resulting in decreased receipts so far as the box-office is concerned. Coincident with this the cost of actual production, of lighting, of salaries, of all incidental expenses connected with the actual staging of a play has enormously increased, and when one adds to this the disgraceful gambling in theatre buildings which sent rents spinning skywards, it becomes obvious that the dice are heavily loaded against any improvement. It is of little use attempting to arouse just indignation against the dealings of financiers which have driven West End theatre rents into hundreds of pounds per week; a community which permits them to pursue the same tactics with food, fuel, and houses is not likely to disapprove of their enterprise as applied to its playhouses, and is indeed much more likely to work itself into an indignant demand for the cutting of actors' wages than to suggest interference with this "legitimate speculation." With the patience born of long usage we can only wait till the economic pendulum swings nearer normal through a series of failures, bankruptcies, and their attendant evils in the form of a precarious livelihood or none for those actually working in the theatre.

In the meantime the problem of the theatre—even the economic problem—is that of public taste. On the highest plane we are faced with the desirability of creating a public demand for any work above the most facile; on the lowest we need to find out just what the public does like and what is the best stuff which can safely be supplied. An endowed theatre could afford to offer good work until its public were educated to it. The great endowed Continental theatres have amply proved this, whilst nearer home one need only look at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre or the "Old Vic." to see the possibilities of creating a public for good work, if only the theatre can be relieved for a sufficient period from the throttle-hold of trade in amusements. Even the frankly commercial theatre in pre-war days could afford to "nurse" a play which seemed worth while, and often to succeed with it ultimately.

Now we have reached a point where untried work can have little hope of being tried. All but the wealthiest of the producing societies have succumbed to the pressure of the economic situation, finding it impossible to pay rents

and costs of a theatre, even for an afternoon. So experimental work has practically ceased.

Here then lies the opportunity for the Experimental Theatre. If it is to be of service under present conditions it must be the meeting-place of the theatre workers, of the business men, and of the audience. To the first it offers the chance of art for art's sake, perhaps with a few guineas and the alert managerial eye to add lustre to the crown of wild olives. To the managers it gives the opportunity of seeing plays escaped from their manuscript, of seeing actors and actresses released from the drudgery of repeating their successes *ad nauseam*, of seeing new effects in staging and production, and finally of testing an audience without the financial risk of production. To the public would come the chance of seeing new work, and, one hopes, of registering its opinion.

In return for this it needs playwrights, actors and actresses, artists and producers willing to give their best for quite nominal fees, and to help support the venture in return for any material results or recognition; it needs managers ready to help by loaning theatres, and to give any needful material help, as men in other businesses would support a research laboratory; and it demands of the public an intelligent critical attitude with financial help to the extent of paying nominal prices for their seats. Under these conditions such a venture could prove of enormous value to everybody concerned with the theatre. The idea was the basis of Tree's Afternoon Theatre and is inherent in the *matinées* promised by Mr. Basil Dean; but its real place is not as the enterprise of one manager so much as the co-operatively owned laboratory doing continual research work for all.

Managers must remember that ultimately the only secure theatre, the only kinema-proof audience is a cultured one. It is that theatre and that audience which such experimental work will help to create.

The Theatre in Russia

The Editors, "Theatre-Craft."

SIR,—As THEATRE-CRAFT, I think, stands for truth and clearness, you will not object if I contribute to these two excellent aims. Since my recent return from Russia I have read in the June issue of your periodical an article on "The Insurgent Theatre in Russia." It is by Francis Treat, and is drawn from that abode of light called "Clarté." On the whole, it appears to be the sort of foggy stuff that persons write about the Theatre in Russia who have not been within a thousand miles of that unhappy country. But Mr. Treat hints that he has been to Russia since the Revolution, and therefore I will let this point pass. You will notice that I am actuated by the spirit of Lord Fisher's excellent dictum, which runs: "Never contradict, never explain, never apologise." Not wholly, I fear, but in greater part. For I am about to explain.

It would take up too much of your very limited space to criticise the article in detail. Let me therefore take two or three typical passages. Here is the first: "The function of the theatre" (Russian), says Mr. Treat, "rests on a two-fold conception—first that of the theatre's educative and civilising mission—on the whole a conservative tendency which concentrates attention upon the masterpieces of the past, selecting, however, in preference those of social significance." "The second conception is that of the theatre as a political instrument." He thereupon proceeds to relate that plays are chosen with a political action, into which the audience of workers and soldiers are irresistibly drawn.

It is misleading to say that the new conception of the Russian Theatre is two-fold. The conception is a simple and single one, just as the new conception of Russia is a single and simple one. From 1917 the Theatre in Russia has been conceived of as a Communistic institution. As such it became part of the great educational machinery to assist the change from an Imperialistic to a Communistic

State. Such was the vision, so to speak, of the new Theatre and the new world which it was to express. Accordingly it was organised to exclude all non-Communistic elements. It was told to be done with the over-assertive individualism which characterised the work of the Theatre from 1860 to 1917; with all forms of commercialism; with the old ruling class and the bourgeoisie; with personalities; with all the dead lumber and weeds that clog up our own effete theatrical institutions. In short, it was told to be done with *isolation*. For the first time in its modern history the Theatre was told to take its place in the great design of creative social service and to stop trying to work out a cut and dried design of its own.

From this fine conception of the Theatre as a force in spiritual illumination akin to the new social unity ideal (let the Communists call it Communism if they like) all the new departures in the Russian Theatre have been made. At first the nationalised or people's theatres were made to declare war on ignorance and on class, and their programmes were chosen accordingly. Then as they gradually passed under the control of the workers and their representatives they began to exhibit attempts (crude and imperfect ones, but intensely instructive all the same) to build the new Russia—the new Workers' World. It was in building this Utopian world of their own that the creative power of the workers began to peep out, entitling many to be called " inspired workers."

Let me pass to another extract. Says Mr. Treat, " While I was in Moscow a so-called Mystery-Farce dealing with the triumph of the Social Revolution over a decadent world was produced by Meyerhold, a pseudo-Reinhardt who has visions of creating a folk-theatre in accordance with his German colleague's recipe.... The title seemed to promise a revival of the old atmosphere of the worst type of West End theatre. Beneath the garish, flickering lights of the circus, the heavy, inane humour and creaking mechanism of the play, acted by a stock company of professionals with a would-be ' popular ' technique, produced a dismal effect of utter boredom." Elsewhere he speaks of " this same play of Meyerhold's." Compare this extract with the following taken from *Broom*, an Italian art and literary publication and translated from the Russian

of Elie Ehrenbourg, an active worker in the new movement in the Russian Theatre. " By presenting the Mystère-Bouffe of the futurist writer, Vladimir Majakowski, an heroic and satirical picture of our time, Meyerhold changes the whole theatre into a stage, not only placing it in the midst of the public, but persuading the latter to take part in the performances. He plans to abolish conventional memories, to exhibit only the faces and the masquerade, and to ignore the script of the play. He demands that the play, from the beginning, must shape itself as it moves along. He regards the work of dramatists as mere problems with the power of automatically unfolding as the production proceeds." In this illuminating paragraph we have a whole world of theatrical reform projected, as far removed from Reinhardt's world as a sound digestion is from a red nose. I will not stop to dissect Reinhardt, although perhaps I know as much about his theory and practice as anyone breathing. But this I will say, that Reinhardt has never planned to establish a people's theatre as the Russians are doing, perhaps not at all. He has never had the material, namely people's plays. The plays current in all countries outside Russia are capitalistic, or intensely individualistic, that is, they are pre-eminently isolating plays. In Russia it is different. The Department of Popular Enlightenment, the workers, and the proletcult have between them invented and established a new form of play which pleases, attracts, and corresponds to the people, and to which the people contribute improvised speech and action.

It is quite easy for anyone who understands the new conception of the Theatre to see that it is developing on the lines of this conception. If Mr. Treat had understood it he would have treated us to information on the new spirit in the Russian Theatre and the principles which actuate it. As it is, he has taken care of Reinhardt's conception and left the Russian conception to take care of itself.

HUNTLY CARTER.

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

The Salamander

By W. B. Seabrook*

For weeks Arthur had not left his rooms. Every day the janitor deposited outside his door the little food he required. Sometimes he opened the door after the janitor had gone away. Frequently he forgot. He had explained that he was writing and did not want to be disturbed. No one else knew where he was, so he was secure from interruption.

But he was not writing. He had not been able to write since he had come out of the hospital. He was waiting for the salamander.

He knew that sooner or later the salamander would come to him, but he was not afraid. He knew that when it came it would either transform itself into a demon woman who would glide out of the flames and consume him in her ardent embraces, or it would retain its natural shape, which is that of a small serpent-like lizard, and, after communicating to him a certain spark of divine fire, would disappear by crawling back into the heart of the glowing coals.

Part of this Arthur had learned from an old book of Rosicrucian mysteries, but most of it he had reasoned out for himself while he lay in the hospital recovering from fever. He was sure that the salamander's gift to him would be the divine spark, for already in his brain there smouldered a little fire which awaited only the serpent's breath to burst into pure white flame.

Sometimes his head ached and bright specks danced before his eyes. When this occurred his brain played strange tricks. The interior of his skull became a vast arena in an amphitheatre. In the centre, on a tripod, flickered a tiny flame which was his soul. And locked in a death struggle before this tripod were a Woman and a Serpent, bright lithe limbs and brighter scaly coils interlocked and writhing . . . Woman and Serpent. . . . Folly and Wisdom . . . Madness and Genius, contending there for his immortal soul . . . wrestling to the death in the amphitheatre of his brain.

*W. B. Seabrook is a well-known American writer of the "new school."

Not often, however, was he obsessed by such phantasies. Most of the time his mind was logical and clear. He had only to wait patiently. The salamander would appear. And his high destiny would be accomplished.

So every night he piled wood in the open fireplace and kept vigil before the flames. When the embers turned grey at dawn he went to bed.

It was on one of these mornings, just before daybreak, when the embers were beginning to burn low, that he first saw the salamander. But the strange part of it was that the salamander was not in the fire. His rooms were in one of those old mansions which one encounters in the slums of lower Manhattan; dilapidated and dirty, fallen from their high estate and cut up into tenement apartments. Their worn doorways are sometimes of an astonishing architectural beauty, and even the interiors, despite alterations and the wear and tear of time, often retain traces of their former dignity and grandeur. In the room where Arthur sat the plaster was broken in places from the walls, and the ceiling was cracked and stained; but the room was large and the ceiling was high, higher than ceilings are built nowadays in the finest modern apartments, and around this ceiling there still ran an elaborate old rococo cornice of white plaster—a formal design, in high relief, of swirling vines and scroll-like leaves.

Weary of staring for long hours into the fire, and convinced that the salamander would not appear that night (the grey dawn was already beginning to outline the high windows), he had thrown himself back in his chair and was watching the flickering lights and shadows as they played on the walls and ceiling, in and out among the curves and crannies of the cornice. Suddenly one of the curled acanthus leaves began to glow faintly and unfold. A luminous lizard wriggled from its depths and poised itself for an instant on the edge of the cornice. Arthur stared—and it was gone. He had seen it. Of that he was sure. But he was not certain whether the salamander had seen him. And that was the important thing. At any rate, nothing more had happened.

Later, in the cold November dawn, as he lay sleepless on his bed, he began to wonder if the thing had not been an hallucination, or even something worse. Either there was a salamander hidden in the cornice of his room, behind

the acanthus leaves, or he was going mad. One point, however, was clear: if the salamander were really up there in the cornice it was useless to look for it any longer in the fire. But how could he make sure? If a salamander were an ordinary creature like a mouse or a rat it might be possible to entice it from its hiding-place . . . even to trap it. . . . After all, why not? Such a thing might be possible if one knew how to go about it . . . seriously. . . .

Presently he fell into a broken sleep, dreaming of setting traps to catch salamanders.

The following afternoon he went out, for the first time in nearly a month, and returned with three packages wrapped in paper hidden under his overcoat. The largest was a wire rat trap, a basket-like affair with a small round opening in one end, guarded on the inside with a circle of sharp barbed points, arranged so as to make entrance easy and exit impossible. The other two packages were a small box of absorbent cotton and a bottle of wood alcohol.

That night Arthur lighted no fire in the hearth. Instead, he placed the wire trap on the floor in the centre of the room, in the pitchblack darkness, baited with a tightly wadded ball of absorbent cotton soaked in alcohol, which he carefully lighted. After watching the bluish flame for a moment, he tip-toed into his alcove bedroom and with the curtains drawn lay down to wait. All day long he had been moving in a dazed fever of suppressed excitement, and it had not occurred to him to take any food. He was surprised now that he felt so light-headed and weary. As he lay on his bed his body seemed to be floating motionless in space, without energy or movement. Now his mind was floating too . . . calm . . . light as a feather . . . floating . . . floating . . . in space and silence. . . .

He was aroused by a sharp sound . . . a scream. From the other room, through the hangings, came a faint ruddy glow. He rose, trembling, and parted the curtains. In the centre of the floor, with the glow radiating from it, was the wire trap. But it was strangely larger than he remembered . . . it was as large as a bushel basket. And crouching, imprisoned in the trap, with the wire bars pressing tightly against her flesh, was a beautiful woman. Her body was rosy, luminous. The wires encircled her so cruelly that she could scarcely move. She was moaning piteously and begging in a voice of agonised sweetness to be released.

Arthur moved towards her—but stopped in terror, for he saw that her breasts were pressed against the pointed barbs, and that from the wounds were trickling little streams of fire! She was not a mortal woman, but a demon. He knew that if he freed her he would be consumed to ashes in her fiery embrace. He knew that he must kill her, if he could, while she was still captive in the cage. She was struggling now, straining with all the force of her cramped body against the taut wires. He would have to be quick! He remembered that there was a long curved paper knife on his writing table. He moved towards it. But it was too late. The wires of the cage were turning red! They were bending . . . breaking . . . she was free!

Rising to her full height, terrible, naked, beautiful, with the little streams of fire still trickling from her breasts, she came with outstretched arms towards him. He could feel her hot breath . . . her arms encircled him . . . already his own body was on fire . . . her burning lips . . .

Arthur awoke from the horrible nightmare trembling and covered with perspiration. He was in a high fever. Everything was in black darkness. From beyond the curtains not a flicker of light. He groped his way blindly into the other room, found matches and a candle. The little wire trap lay empty in the centre of the floor. The ball of cotton was burned to a charred crisp. The acanthus leaves in the cornice were cold, white, motionless. He had endured tortures—no less real because they were a dream—and all for nothing.

The next morning he was still feverish and a little delirious. Yet it seemed to him that his mind was singularly clear. He realised as he lay in bed thinking that he might be mistaken about the salamander. Perhaps there was no salamander in the cornice; no demon woman. Perhaps it had all been an illusion of his distorted mind. Perhaps there was no such thing as a salamander, no such thing as a divine spark.

Somewhere in the back of his brain an absurd sentence began to form itself, a sentence which he had long ago heard, or read, while seated (it seemed to him) with a Capucin monk in the rotisserie of a queen:

"My son, I am fifty years of age; I am a bachelor of arts and a doctor of theology; I have read all the Greek and Latin authors who have survived the injury done by

time and the evil done by men, and I have never seen a salamander, whence I reasonably conclude that no such thing exists."

As he lay and slowly repeated the forgotten sentence he was seized by a spasm of rage. "God curse the bachelors of arts and doctors of theology!" he screamed aloud. "If salamanders no longer exist, it is because these men have murdered them!"

After this outburst he lay quiet for a while, pondering. If the bachelors of arts and doctors of theology were right . . . if they were right about anything . . . clearly it was useless to go on living. It required no genius to see that, quite independently of the question of salamanders. But was there or was there not a salamander in the cornice? It was absolutely necessary to know. But how? He was thinking quite sanely now, he believed, and presently he began to formulate a plan—a plan that was simple and could not fail.

That afternoon he went out again, and when he returned he carried two heavy cans of kerosene. He chose an hour when he knew the janitor would be in the basement. No one saw him leave or enter the house. He remembered that kindling and firewood were stored in the basement. It would be well to bring up a few armfuls later, in case his furniture was not sufficient. Meanwhile he would lie down and rest. He was quite tired and ill.

A little after dark he arose, lighted the gas, and began work. But it was nearly midnight before his preparations were completed. The fire mounted quicker and more fiercely than he had anticipated. The brightness and roaring frightened him a little, but he stood with his arms shielding the lower part of his face, steadfastly watching the acanthus leaves. The flames were licking the wall, running along the cornice, spreading over the ceiling. Now the acanthus leaves began to writhe and glow. His eyes were smarting painfully and the smoke was beginning to hurt his lungs. He was growing dizzy. He felt that in a moment he would fall. But there, out of the glowing foliage, out of the heart of the flames, the salamander was coming, coming to him at last. And with transfigured face, with outstretched arms, he went to the fulfilment of his dreams.

The British Empire Exhibition, 1924

By Austin Harrison

VISUALISING the great gap made in our exports capacity by Europe's inability to buy, consequent on the peace of the mad exchanges, our thoughts almost instinctively turn to that vast exploitable field known as the Empire, which still remains largely untapped, almost ludicrously unpopulated, the natural nursery and reservoir of all our wants. And we say " turn to the Colonies." It is a plausible redress. What we have lost in Europe, we should be able to make up in the Empire. If the market of Central Europe, representing, say, £80,000,000 a year, has gone, we can sell that equivalent to the Colonies, and on paper the proposition looks rosy enough. Nothing is easier than to compile important lists of the supplies produced and producible within the Empire, from tobacco, flax, silk, wool, cotton, coal, oil, rubber, lead, nickel, copper, timber, hides, jute, gold and silver, etc., to wheat, barley, maize, oats, rice, fruits, linseed, copra, meat and live cattle, etc.; in short, to prove that the Empire can grow everything and that, as such, it should be a completely self-contained, self-supporting unit, as independent of the European market as is America, and as flourishing.

In 1924 the British Empire Exhibition will reveal to the country the astonishing capacity of supplies produced and producible within the Empire; the object of this article is to focus attention on the vital need of making it a colossal success.

Had the Empire developed along the lines of economic reasonableness, as a single unit, this condition would undoubtedly be a true potential; but the Empire is not a *Zollverein* and did not follow the German colonial prescription, men say because such is not our racial genius. The consequence is the present curiously baffling position. We are not an economic whole. We cannot thus finance on the Empire, which is a congeries of independent units whose several devolpments depend not upon our home production, but upon increased production, population, and capital in the respective Colonies. The problem is thus extraordinarily fascinating. Not only is it illogical as a

theorem, it is economically of dangerous consequence to ourselves unless some practical singleness of policy can be arrived at, which while preserving the independence of the units yet promotes the interests and welfare, which are common, of the whole. For, stated brutally, the evolution must follow one of two courses. Either we utilise the Colonies to help us make good in Britain, or the Colonies utilise us to aggrandise and enrich themselves. The danger to us of the latter course need not be emphasised.

Few people would to-day care to dogmatise about economics, which seems to be a theory of qualifications, as we all realise at this juncture, even about money and the old fallacy of the immutable value of the gold sovereign. A few examples will show the nature of the difficulty. In 1920 we could not export to Australia because Europe could not buy Australia's wool. Similarly with India's tea owing to the collapse of the Russian market. Our selling-power to the Colonies was dependent upon the Colonies' selling-power to Europe. We cannot finance on the Colonies—that is the point. When the selling-power of the Colonies is restricted owing to European difficulties, our exports are restricted to the Colonies. We are a world Empire and trade is interdependent. The problem narrows down to a self-evident claim of preservation. It is how to fill up the European gap (1) as regards the loss of our European sales, (2) as regards the loss of the Colonies' European sales. In a word, can we so arrange our respective sales and purchases so as to be practically independent of alien markets?

Under a *Zollverein* of course we could. But even as an idea this solution is ruled out because the Colonies will not look at it. Our pre-war theory of Empire died in the war. The very word "Empire" is not colonially popular; a better word is "Commonwealth." Certainly the political conception on Roman lines of an Empire centrally run from London, as expounded by a group of Pro-Consular theorists, was shot up in the war; the tendency is rather the other way. Yet the spirit is strongly cohesive, even astonishingly so. The bond of speech, of tradition, of culture and civilisation, is real and living, and perhaps this link is a deeper intangible power than any treaty of commerce ever could be. We see that in the will of Australia to defeat the exchange problem by pricing all alien

imports at the price level of British exports; on the other hand, we have seen in the Canadian cattle agitation an undeniable tendency to finance on Britain, probably not to the advantage of one section of British farming, as we shall discover.

Again, take cotton. On paper we could probably grow sufficient cotton in Egypt, India, Africa, and Australia to free ourselves from the American market. What is the difficulty? It is labour. An immense amount of cheap labour is required. In America the labour is black. Now Australia refuses coloured labour. Her policy, economically stated, is that of the dog-in-the-manger. A huge continent remains unpopulated—Japan is pushed into imperial militarism as the result. Were Australia populated in the tropical parts, whole regions of productivity would appear and we would greatly benefit. But Australia is adamant on her race problem. The cotton question thus seems confined to Egypt, where cheap labour is obtainable. Our imperial economics are involved in the human problem; and in India in particular this is the case. Then there is the question of intensive competition. Thirty years ago Germany and Japan hardly counted. To-day, Japan is a fierce rival with cheap labour, and Germany, if she is to pay reparations, can only pay by becoming a world rival. Now there is an industrialised France working, on paper credit, for exports competition; and America. Here another awkward question arises, that of output per head. In 1914 Mr. A. W. Flux estimated that the industrial output per head in America was roughly double that shown by the census for Great Britain. We all know what this is—ca' canny. It has not ameliorated since the war. Its ultimate expression is high prices. Even with the best will in the world, it is very doubtful whether the Colonies will indefinitely buy British goods for sentimental reasons at a higher price than they need pay for foreign goods of equal value; as we know, the South African stores, for instance, are full of stuff from Germany, which we cannot begin to compete with. Thus pianos for a fiver; razors for a shilling, etc., etc. Our standing as regards competition starts gravely handicapped. In addition to high wages, we have this restriction of output difficulty. The national habit of treating work as unworthy, though this applies chiefly to the South of England, must seriously increase our difficul-

ties in the teeth of the competition run on exchange—dumping, foreign willingness to work, and low wages; indeed the tendency is for both capital and labour to run away from the home competition; the former by foreign investments, the latter by emigration.

In 1913 our exports to the Empire amounted to £195,311,399; to all other foreign countries to £329,942,196.

In 1921 the total to the Empire was £298,770,872; to other countries, £404,425,410.

Thus in 1921 over 40 per cent. of our exports went to the Empire.

Now the axiom of trade is to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest, and the fact must be faced that our Colonies are reversing the law by buying our higher-priced goods for sentimental reasons. Can that inversion of economic law continue? If not, and almost inevitably it will not continue, what is the solution to our problem of Empire developing on the lines of separate competitive units? It looks like De Tocqueville's epigram about the ripe fruits. We ought surely to be considering the matter pretty carefully.

Tariff Reformers say frankly that the only solution is the rearrangement of the currents of trade, which of course means imperial preference. If, they argue, the European gap is to be filled, we must see to it that the currents of trade are diverted from Europe to within the Empire, just as Australia, since the war, refines all her lead ore production, 46.50 per cent. of which before the war was refined in the smelteries of Germany. Preference is, of course, a controversial subject and cuts both ways. We experienced its meaning in connection with the Canadian cattle embargo; no doubt there is a great deal to be said for it. But the larger aspect of the question is disturbing. Tariffs lead to tariff wars. One of the worst features of the post-war world is this frenzied tariff barrier system which has so largely contributed to the breakdown of financial Europe. Man must co-operate or fight. If the world is to be reconstituted on systems of Protection, it is mere futility to talk of ending war, or peace, or any hope of a "new order," nor does there seem any likelihood of arriving at that harmony of capital and labour essential to prosperity, or any prospect of modifying a system which of necessity degrades

and enslaves an increasing number of workers. Our danger is that which confronted Rome from her far-flung dependencies, for that, too, was economic. It is the human factor *versus* the system. To-day, we are undoubtedly faced with enforced emigration which will for the most part go to the Colonies. Men say, for every hundred colonial settlers we have a hundred potential buyers. That is so theoretically, if we rule out prices or competition. But as the exodus increases our home purchasing-power decreases, so that in process of time the purchasing-power will lie without the country, in which case our producing-power will diminish. Were we to emigrate 2,000,000 workers this year, wages here would not fall, and it is an open question how long the Colonies will buy dear for imperial reasons. Cynically stated, our interest would be to industrialise the Empire on cheap or coloured labour coupled with a wise emigration policy. The Colonies, on the other hand, want to increase our home purchasing-power so as to develop and maintain their prosperity. The problem is sentiment or good-will *versus* the cruel laws of economics. It is we who are in straits, not the Colonies. We have this desperate fact to wrestle with. Our exports in 1921 were £703,000,000. Now we have to find for pensions, interest on debts and sinking fund, about £500,000,000 per annum. Faced with that staggering proposition, unless we are prepared to devaluate or write down, it does not look as if we could afford to neglect any market for any reason whatsoever, still less that we can afford to write off the purchasing-power of the world as negligible (amounting to £404,425,410 in 1921), in view of the keen and new competition from countries like France and Japan and of our low output per head, and the unpleasant certainty that we, perhaps alone of the belligerents, are unlikely to refuse the burden of our obligations by " monkeying " with the currency or debt in the interests of our superb credit position.

At the same time the Empire is there, awaiting development. It can grow everything. Certainly, as regards food supplies, raw materials, and essential industries, the Empire could be made self-containable; it would appear extraordinary if we do not set about the job with all dispatch. Europe to-day is a quagmire. If Germany smashes financially, Europe may decline into semi-mediæval conditions; it is impossible to forecast the fate of Europe in the slough

of bankruptcy threatening the credit system of the world. It would be supreme folly to close our eyes and expect salvation from European "paper," and if politicians will not, or cannot, stop the rot, denounce the war treaties and restart Europe on solid foundations, then of a certainty, unless we turn to the Empire and build up there what we have destroyed in Europe, our decline is inevitable, and as the centre creaks the outlying units will drift apart, as was the case with Rome and Spain, from lack of initiative and vision.

In 1924 the British Empire Exhibition is to be opened at Wembley Park, where the new stadium is being built. We shall see gathered there the products of the whole Empire; it will probably be a landmark in our history. Our entire economic future is bound up with the Empire, and if we cannot find ways and means to make the Empire self-containable and to obtain the basis of a common economic interest and policy, then there must be something rotten in the state of England. A Conference of Empire is needed to restate the whole position. We can drop the old imperial plan and with it the Proconsul conception of development. The plan should be Empire economics. Can we advantageously finance on one another? If not, what? If we can, and of course a policy could be found, then a great human work lies before us in which our civilisation will be tested and proven.

The last Imperial Conference ended in pious affirmations, chiefly because the Colonies disliked our Public School Empire politics and we shirked facing the real issues. We ought to begin afresh. An immense work awaits our efforts in Egypt. The question of Australia's "right" before the world to refuse colonisation needs careful consideration. Given the readiness to co-operate, the Empire should at least be able to come to some basis of trade policy, which is perhaps all that we need aim at. No rapid results can be expected, and the whole problem bristles with human difficulties ranging from ca' canny to the foreign exchanges and the controversial question of coloured labour. A beginning should be made. It is to be hoped that by the time the British Empire Exhibition opens public feeling will be alive to the enormous importance of the Empire to Britain and of Britain to the Empire.

She Takes up Golf Again

By Dell Leigh

SHE has announced her intention of taking up the game again, and my Sundays will now become a hollow mockery to me.

This is really very trying of her.

She is a good wife in most respects; in every respect in fact—until she gets what my brother-in-law calls a bee in her bonnet about something. I should not, of course, dare to suggest that she wore anything approaching a bonnet for a bee to settle in. But Bob is a free lance in these matters, and has a breezy way, which I much envy, of sweeping aside biting sarcasm at breakfast by such remarks as:

"Of course it's a bonnet, my dear girl, don't be childish. Do you suppose I don't know a bonnet when I see one? Ridiculous."

But then Bob is a blissfully ignorant bachelor, and a brother to boot.

The particular bee that has, shall we say, settled upon her person is in respect of a sudden and quite unaccountable craze to play golf again. And with me.

I thought I had got her safely concentrated upon the sole charge of the herbaceous border this autumn. I may say that hitherto it has been my lot to manicure the herbaceous border. But she said some time ago, distinctly and with emphasis, that it had been "atrociously looked after"; and so I relinquished the reins of government in this matter for the sake of a little peace, and golf. I suppose her latest mandate is to some extent my fault. I have been playing very well lately, since the committee altered that absurd out-of-bounds rule at the third hole, and on returning home I have, perhaps unwisely, gone over some of the day's holes with her with a shade too much wealth of detail. Be that as it may, the ultimatum was delivered on Sunday night.

SHE TAKES UP GOLF AGAIN

I had come in radiantly three up and two on Tubbins, and was telling her about it. Tubbins is a safe 8 (on his own course), and it is idle for her to protest that no man can possibly play any game with a name like his. However, in the midst of my injudicious monologue on how miraculously I had laid it as near dead as makes no odds, out of those infernal rushes at the twelfth, she got up and began swinging my new driver on the stone floor of the conservatory. When my torture was at screaming point, she came back to the now clammy buttered toast and said:

"You know, Ernest, I *have* got rather a decent swing, whatever you may say."

The statement was carried unanimously, and I passed my cup and hoped for the best while fearing the worst. So long as she did not transfer her affections suddenly to my favourite iron on the gravel outside all would be fairly well; fair to middling, that is.

She became thoughtful and distrait after tea; and towards supper-time reappeared from the garage with a bag of old clubs I had bought for her thirteen years ago on our honeymoon.

The exact wording of the capital sentence was:

"You know I really think I shall take this game up again. The Pro. always said I should make quite a good player if I stuck to it, and you are always saying I don't take enough exercise."

"Yes, dear, I think you would, too. Er—jolly good exercise, of course: only thing that keeps me alive."

"But you will be a nice one to me if I do, and not neglect your poor little wiffs Sunday after Sunday?"

"How do you mean, neglect? Pretty decent sort of husband, aren't I?"

I knew I was being edged into the corner of definite committal, and began to fight feebly for time.

"Personally," I said, bending down to attend to a perfectly orderly shoe-lace, so that the fright in my vapid face should not be manifest, "I am all in favour of your taking it up again. I like playing with you, you know that. Difficulty is, of course, about the week-end. You know how strict they are about ladies playing on Sundays at Furzedown. Absurd, and hideously unfair, but—er—there it is."

"Oh, *Furzedown*! Of course, we should not play there—filthy place."

She swept aside one of England's most classic courses with an imperious gesture.

"Well, where then? Only too delighted, my dear, if you can suggest a *better* course; most people consider Furz——"

"Oh, yes, it's all right, I suppose, for you. But they give us a tin shed to wash in, and allow us to play only when none of our menfolk are there to play with us. Scandalous. No, I was thinking of Maplecross. You're still a member there, aren't you? You were on the committee or something once, weren't you?"

I was gibbering a rapid and silent prayer that she had forgotten this bestial course, where you want a mashie on the greens, and stand in perpetual water in all the bunkers.

But she forgets nothing.

"Yes," I replied, cleverly concealing the despair in my voice, "I am still a member there. Not much of a course, though—now."

"Why now? Topping course I used to think it, with those dinky little bunkers dotted about the hillside. A sweetly pretty place; and they give women equal rights there, and don't treat them like so many brown-paper parcels."

But to cut a pathetic story short, I have got to take a day off on Thursday. It is Indian mail day at the office, of course, but what does that matter?

"You've got two fat partners. They never do a stroke of work. Do them good. Besides, I can't play on Wednesday, the Matheson woman is coming to lunch. And I simply *must* go up to the White Sale at Orridhams on Tuesday, we are dreadfully short of sheets. So that's what we will do. Splendid! But, darling, I think you might clean my little clubs up for me. You wouldn't like to see your wife going out with her clubs thick with rust, now, would you?"

No, I wouldn't. So there is another evening to be spent in blasphemy and the boot-room.

Of course, what will happen will be that at two of the short holes she will hit a couple of good shots, and she will be so bucked with them that they will carry her, on

the crest of a wave of optimism, over the other 16. And I shall indeed be undone thereafter.

One of the major troubles that beset me about this business is that she looks so infernally nice in a golf-skirt. She will wear a jumper of some sort, frightfully serviceable and pretty, and unlike any other woman's. And the few palsied men who hang about the Maplecross Links day after day, and are complete wasters, will follow her about with their livery eyes in open admiration. I shall be very proud of this, and curse myself for a selfish brute for not having encouraged her to play the game long ago.

The day appointed for her re-advent will break cloudy with a high wind. I shall get the car ready at 9.30; and I shall then hang about, *faute de mieux*, at the front door, looking for trouble which does not exist in the carburetter, and thumping the auto-vac suspiciously for a possible but extremely unlikely air-lock. This will go on until about 10.5. On my expostulating she will say:

"Well, darling, I suppose you want some dinner tonight. I must *order* it, you know; all very well for *you*."

And when we have proceeded, in a strained silence, for a mile, she will suddenly ask me if I put her clubs in the dickey?

"Well, I do think you *might* have done that for me, knowing how rushed I was."

When I head the car homewards again and remark in a resigned voice that people usually bring their own golf clubs, I shall be told this is nonsense, and that *nice* men look after their wives. And I shall feel I have said the wrong thing again.

The caddie she used to have will remember her (most people remember her) and will beam with delight at the prospect of the outrageously large tip that he knows will be his, "because he is such a dear." I shall be asked with an irresistible sweetness on the tee if I have got a nice clean little ball for her.

But this sort of thing won't do at all. There are limits. And I shall say "No" firmly, as I extract my new purple "Fly-True" from its wrappings. Then she will unearth from the bag a couple of dun-coloured balls with a chastened air; and I shall feel such a pig that I shall slice my drive, and away will go 3*s*. into a 20-foot furze bush.

I know I am not a good teacher. But there will be certain elementary principles so flagrantly ignored, and such travail will ensue, that words of caution and advice will be wrung from me against my better judgment. And this is what will happen:

"My dear man, if you are going to tell me to remember half a dozen things at once, just as I am addressing the ball, we may as well both go home. I simply cannot play like that—nobody could. . . . Now what on earth did I do then? What? I *didn't* lift my head up; my eyes were positively glued to the beastly ball—oh, no, you're wrong there. . . . Vardon says . . ."

At about the sixth hole I shall go all to pieces myself. It is contagion. Largely it will be due to the fact that my pockets will by then be bulging indignantly with her belongings. A powder-puff will be snuggled insidiously into one pocket at the second, and a cigarette case and matchbox will rattle about on me from the long seventh onwards, and I cannot play in full marching order. It is also partly because at each hole, even if I have already played 8, which is rather more than likely, I shall still have 3 for it—and that makes one diabolically careless. She will get very tired and drawn about her eyes, and, perceiving that, I shall miss the ball altogether off the sixteenth tee. A thing I haven't done for years.

But at lunch, when she is enthusiastic, after a cocktail, over that remarkable approach of hers at the fourteenth (the caddie had said he had "never seen the Pro. do it no better, an' that's a fac' "), my *miserere* will be in full song. Because at this period the hated female friend will stroll nonchalantly into the dining-room. She is one of those dreadful women who can give me a half and beat me easily. Moreover, she is very quiet and diffident about it, so that the sting of invariable defeat sinks deeper. She plays for the county, is 4 L.G.U., and has never been known to get rattled. The latter I consider almost indelicate. My wife and she are great friends, and the hated female will greet her with a wild and, in my opinion, wholly misplaced rejoicing.

"My *dear*, how splendid! And so you are taking it up again. *That's* right. I always said you would make a player, with practice. That's all you want,

practice; and we must see that you get it, mustn't we, Ernest? I'm sure you will see that she does. Now tell me, dear, have you got the right clubs? I don't suppose you have. We must examine them after lunch."

They do.

"Oh, *these*," says the County Creature, handling them contemptuously. "W—ell, of course, they are all wrong for you, quite wrong."

The fact that I gave them to her, after most careful personal selection, is of no moment. They are wrong. Hopeless. There is nothing right about them. There is only one thing to be done. A new set.

I was once a silent and amazed spectator when the County Creature took a girl cousin of mine to be re-equipped by a fashionable golf club maker in London, and I can visualise the scene with a deadly clarity.

On that occasion we strolled into the shop, risking death from club swingers in every direction, and alert salesmen, seeing the famous player standing eyeing their stock critically, became listless and inert with their customers and were obviously anxious to effect a sale with someone like her, who really knew about clubs.

The manager emerged from a beeswaxy fastness in the background, all smiles and pleasurable anticipation.

"Morning, Fred," she said casually, lighting a cigarette, "you don't seem to have got a decent club in the place."

"No, miss, we haven't. Not one."

And this within earshot of at least half a dozen mediocre customers. But it seems there are clubs *and* clubs. Those on sale were apparently for the don't-matters. For ordinary folk, like myself for example, who pick out several from the rack until one comes to hand that feels nice, and looks nice, and is bought without further ado.

"Oh, yes," the County Creature would say patronisingly, "it's all *right*."

But it is not a CLUB, in the sense that she and the manager speak together about clubs, in the weird jargon of loft and balance and shaft finish.

On being asked what he proposes to do about his paucity of respectable weapons, he winks solemnly, and we descend to the packing-casey depths, where his own and other

luminaries' clubs are stored. Here a " special " mashie is produced from his own bag—one he " picked up " in Scotland during the Championship, and would part with, *to her*.

The dull gleam of the connoisseur coming suddenly upon a gem appears in her eyes, as she waggles it and tests its elasticity in true professional fashion; in a way that I can't even handle a club; the way of the expert.

" Ye-es, a goodish little club, that. A *shade* of fining down at the base, perhaps, and five-eighths off the grip—m'm, yes, we'll have that. But what about some proper wooden clubs, Fred? Can't you produce something better than those dreadful things upstairs? "

He can, and he does, from cobwebby corners. Clubs which are not to be swung and mutilated by the likes of you and me, who would not appreciate their delicacy. But only by the elect, who can really use them with a great artistry.

I am in for a new set for her, I can see that. It is going to be horribly expensive.

Chess

By J. R. Capablanca

I AM always being asked, What kind of a brain must a chess champion possess? What qualities are essential? What relation is there between chess and other mental activities? What about Englishmen? etc. To begin with, I can only say that I have to-day a rather poor memory, though as a child I could remember anything with ease. My record is to have repeated, when a small boy, three pages of history after I had read them once, without missing a single word. But as I have grown older—in fact since I became a first-class chess player—I have always tried to forget everything which I have not considered essential to remember, and I have succeeded so well in my training that I now have difficulty in remembering things in general. It so happens, now, that while there are several experts who remember every serious game I have played in the last twenty-two years, I can hardly remember a single one of them. A game played to-day I may hazily keep in my head for a few weeks, but after that it is gone for ever. No doubt my present poor memory is a cultivated one. I have been influenced to adopt this system in order to avoid loss of sleep after a hard struggle at night. Thus I can go to sleep right after a game, whether I win or lose, and one hour after a long, strenuous, simultaneous *séance* against any number of opponents I may be found peacefully sleeping in my bed.

In a general way the memory of chess experts is like the memory of the great musicians. Just the same as a great pianist, for instance, can sit down and play for hours without looking at the score of any of the works he plays, a chess master can go through endless games and variations which he has unconsciously stored in his mind. The great musicians see the notes in their minds' eyes as though they were in front of them. In just the same way the chess master sees the moves and positions. If momentarily they forget a note or a move, the previous

note or move, as the case may be, will remind them of the one to follow. There is a logical sequence that helps the expert to overcome his difficulties. In fact, it should be noticed that there must be some analogy between the minds of a musician and a chess player. I know several eminent musicians who are very fond of chess, and on the other hand nearly all the expert chess players are very fond of music. We must mention as the most striking case that of Philidor, the pioneer of the modern theory of chess, a chess genius, the strongest player of his epoch, who was also one of the eminent French musicians of his time. What kind of brain is required to be a chess champion I could not say, but I hold that outside whatever natural gifts in that direction one may possess it is very important, if not altogether essential, to have a fairly good general education, so that having a greater outlook one may look upon the so-called game from a broader point of view. This should be more true now than formerly, since chess has progressed enormously during the last sixty years, and to become the champion is a far more difficult task now. In this respect it would be well to call attention to the fact that while it is true that there have been in the past, as there are at present, some great chess players who are nonentities at anything else and who have very little culture of any kind, on the other hand all the world's champions of the last sixty years, not including myself, have been men with more than a common general culture. That was the case with Anderssen, Steinitz, and Lasker. In this respect I can lay no claim to pre-eminence of any sort. All that can be put forth on my behalf is that I have read and seen a great deal, that I have an open mind, and that I am ready to learn anything on any subject. It might be well to call attention to the fact that chess as generally played by the large majority of players is merely a game more difficult than other games, but when played by the leading masters it ceases to be a game and becomes what might be called a minor scientific art. At its present stage of development it has a great deal of a science, but it has also a great deal of an art. Whether it will ever become an absolute science is only a matter of speculation. With regard to the essential qualities in the make-up of a champion it is difficult to lay down a dictum. It might be pos-

sible for a player to attain the highest place through the unusual power of one or two qualities that might be merely normal in another player fully as strong through the development of other qualities, which in their turn are only normal in the first case. There are, however, two qualities which seem to be absolutely essential in order to obtain pre-eminence in chess. They are: unusual powers of concentration and the power to visualise positions which may arise from the position in front of the player. It has often been stated that a mathematical brain was required in order to excel as a chess player. While it is true that Anderssen was a professor of mathematics and that Lasker is a mathematician, we find that Morphy was a lawyer and Philidor a musician. That so far as champions are concerned. With regard to other players who have never been champions, but who have become world's figures in chess, we may mention, amongst others, Tarrasch, a physician; Pillsbury, a lawyer; Alekhine, a lawyer; Zukertort, a physician. In England itself we have in the 'fifties Howard Staunton, a Shakespearean scholar, and Buckle, an historian. Surely there is enough variety in the mentalities of the few men we have mentioned. At present the only eminent players with mathematical brains are Dr. E. Lasker, ex-world's champion, and Dr. M. Vidmar. Incidentally, we may add that Dr. Vidmar is a well-known authority amongst electrical engineers, as he has published some excellent treatises on the subject. He is also a professor at the University of Ljubljana, Czecho-Slovakia, and at the same time managing director of some engineering works in the above-named city, all of which does not prevent him from being one of the foremost chess players in the world, which shows that excellence in chess is not incompatible with excellence in other directions.

We come now to the point regarding the country and the people most adept at the game. While in the past the Jews and the Slavs have been most prominent, I do not believe that it is necessarily a matter of race. On the other hand, as chess has progressed and to excel at it has become more difficult, the question of climate has, in my opinion, come in more as a determining factor. Evidently, since chess is by its nature an indoor game, it should be played more in countries with cold climates and long winter nights

than in countries where the weather is always inviting the individual to go outdoors. Englishmen are generally patient, determined, and serious-minded. These are excellent qualifications for chess. Unfortunately in their school-days they spend most of their spare time outdoors, hunting during the winter. Chess is consequently not generally learned at an early age, which is the proper time to learn in order to become a good player. There are, nevertheless, throughout England a very large number of very good players, and if there is not at present any one of them who ranks amongst the best in the world, it is mainly due to lack of proper support in the form of international contests. It is only through close contact with the best experts that the standard of play can be raised. There has been only one big international tournament in England in the last twenty-three years. I hope that in the future more support will be given for such contests, so that England may soon occupy once more a leading position in chess.

There are some considerations in regard to chess as an educational force that might be interesting to consider. Chess with regard to the mind might be said to be what sports or athletics are with regard to the body: a way to exercise and give pleasure at the same time. Morally, it tends to keep away those who play it from other dangerous indoor activities. Betting is uninteresting; more, betting is practically out of the question, because of the very nature of the game, a fact which should commend it to the attention of educationists. As a social factor it occupies a unique position. It brings together men from all stages of the social scale, regardless of creed or religion. The game is the same all over the world. In travelling from one place to another one can have no better recommendation to assure him a warm welcome than to be a chess player. All one has to do anywhere throughout the world is to find out where the chess players meet and to go there. Many a time I have seen a stranger come into a leading chess club and ask for one of the officials. His statement that he was a chess player visiting the town and his address was all that was required. He was promptly asked to make himself at home. If he wanted an opponent one was soon found for him, and thus he soon became acquainted with people whom he could not perhaps have met in any other way.

Oranges and Lemons

By the Editor

War has made many great whom peace makes small. If after release from the toils of war, you neglect the arts of peace, if your *peace* and your liberty be a state of warfare . . . you will soon find peace most adverse to your interests.

Your peace will only be a more distressing war. The fidelity of enemies and allies is frail and perishing unless it be cemented by principles of justice.

JOHN MILTON wrote these words in his *Second Defence of the People of England*, 1654—they are the words of the artist-prophet. All our post-war troubles are the direct result of a peace which was designed as a state of war. Instead of a settlement based upon principles of justice, Europe was regrouped and remapped on definite motives of revenge, economic exploitation, and military ascendancy with results that are to-day slowly making themselves felt —here, in social, economic, and political chaos; there, in general financial anarchy the end of which no man can foretell. To-day, we are pulled up short because one of these monstrous Treaties has been broken up by war. The Turks, in saving themselves, have saved us. The repercussion strikes at England. Chaotically, the Coalition falls; we are plunged into a General Election.

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Allah is good. The lesson will not be lost upon a world in chains, and unless we probe to the roots and realise the futility of trying to build castles upon the shifting sands of bankruptcy, neither the coming nor any other election will serve a better purpose than strife and confusion. What is the truth about this fatality that has befallen us in Constantinople? It is simply the quarrel of the victors over the " swag." We backed Greece, France backed Turkey. Our interests were the oil of Persia and Mesopotamia—the Shell Group; and Navalism, of which the euphemistic expression is the " freedom of the Straits." But France too has oil interests—the Standard Oil Group;

and Constantinople is to her the trump card to be played on a restored " white " Russia in return for the pre-war military alliance against Central Europe. France, as usual, took care to equip the Turks efficiently; we, as usual, trusted to luck, and so, when the Turks were ready and struck, the Greeks collapsed, thus exposing the divergent policies of Britain and France, a rift which came to a head when France, perforce carrying out the terms of her secret Treaty with Turkey, left us in the lurch at Chanak accompanied by Italy, leaving us with no alternative but to fight or give way.

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The French policy was bluff; they were astonished at our attitude of firmness; war was averted at the eleventh hour because France realised that we were in earnest and that the resulting complications would not only break the Entente, but react very disadvantageously to her. The real point in the crisis is the Entente. France has made a stupendous miscalculation expressed in the new French newspaper word " to Chanak." Her chief aim for two years has been to discredit the Premier. The whole world situation has been really controlled by a duel between France's determination to unhorse the Premier and his determination to keep in the saddle, and the Turkish crisis, which can be settled any day by us openly or clandestinely as we please, is nothing more than a political joust for the position of mastery within the Entente. So far it has led to remarkable paradoxes. The Gladstonian policy of " bag and baggage " has been thrown down by Liberalism, while the traditional " Christian " policy of France has espoused Islam, like the Kaiser. Our Jingo Press turned c.o. at the thought of arms; our League of Nations Press preached the fiery cross; other organs practised " gliding " operations from one nose-dive to another. Net result: a General Election.

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The whole episode, comic or disgraceful, reveals the deadly position we are in as the direct consequence of a peace which is a state of war; which sets us up, as the flaming sword of France, to be the fighting Tetrarch of an enslaved Europe, exposed to at least a dozen potential wars

after the example of Turkey and exposed to the instability of a control which has become a personal international fight as between the politicians of France and our own. Any week we might be confronted with a similar position over Roumania: who has grabbed Transylvania from Hungary and Bessarabia from Russia. Any month someone may "Chanak" over Poland, over the Jugo-Slavs, over Palestine, over Bulgaria promised by Treaty a port on the Ægean, over Mesopotamia, over the latest fighting theory, the "freedom of the Straits," which, like "self-determination," seems calculated to set Europe by the ears. The specific Turkish question will no doubt now be settled amicably. We were lucky to have an Irishman in command on the politicians' battle-ground, and it is clear that we "don't want to fight," though no doubt we should have had to but for the prompt dispatch of considerable forces to the spot, which caused France to forbid the Turks the risk of testing them. The question of the Straits will remain—and Russia.

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Thus the Tories are to-day c.o.'s, and the Prime Minister, straddled in the *rôle* of Peter the Hermit, is forced to appeal unto Cæsar. If the last election was a "dud," the coming one will certainly be a dude. Parties are in the air; Labour emphatically does not seek office; there is no cry, hardly a lie crawls sufficiently plausible to go round —not even a cow is promised us; only the adhesions of the Coalition ramifications remain amid the wee roar of what are styled "Die Hards" ready to die in the last ditch for the Premier's head. Yet it is a wholesome chaos, and the more chaotic the better. England has got to learn to think again and talk again, and England has got to return to some mechanism of constitutional government capable of giving her a policy and a sanction other than that of newspaper heroics. It is amusing to reflect that the Turk has bestowed this priceless boon upon us, for had he been a bad Turk but a good loser we should doubtless have gone on chasing the butterflies of Reparations and European insanity till the appointed hour of the Coalition had arrived. Let us be thankful for this Turkish mercy. We now know one or two things we had forgotten,

one of which is that Islam is alive, another that tiger-hunting in a jungle of lies is a dangerous pastime.

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The issue of the election will thus be—ourselves. Which party is returned to power, in what strength and on what pretences, is of comparatively slight importance. What really matters is the new Parliament. If we can get a stout Opposition pledged to principles, if we can get new men determined to fight down shams and illusions, if we can get a House that will regain power over the public purse, that will restore Ministerial responsibility, that will compel the Government to think intelligently and act on the lie of the facts instead of on the facts of the lies, we shall have good cause to rejoice. Better than this we cannot yet hope for. It looks as if a Coalition in some form may be inevitable, but that will not signify provided Parliament is alive, and the regroupings have principles, and the new men are not the old men who have sat in Parliament ever since 1918 inert and lifeless, like the wax figures in Madame Tussaud's. What the country now needs is friction. Newspaper heroics have become nauseous to both puppet and audience. The underlying cry will be: " back to principles." Not lemonade heroes —things. Not I—we. Not this clever fellow or that bouncing chap, but England, the universe, peace and a little truth.

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Perhaps the saddest feature of Britain to-day is the public's disgust with politics and politicians and the absurd public inertia as its consequence. Literally, no one seems to care or to believe in anything or anybody. I have heard distinguished middle-aged men say: " I no longer care a button what happens. The country can go to blazes for all I care." It is the result of years of organised strangulation of opinion, and the sufferings of those who fought against this throttle-hold. Disillusionment is the prevailing note, despair the only too frequent expression. Age has abdicated, as if afraid or stunned into acceptance; youth has taken the short cut to relief in levity and indifference. Our Proconsuls are no more or retired with the O.B.E. The daily Press is an insurance policy, when not a police

court chronicle, whose politics are the facets of sensationalism. Better dance, is the public's mood. Practically, the issue is the Premier. France has toppled him over at last. When I stood against the Premier in 1918, a man called out "Mr. Lloyd George is the saviour of the world." Ask M. Poincaré. The question to-day is, can anyone save us at all—from our deserts? Has anyone a redeeming plan? If so, let him step forward. His hour has come. We have ears to hear. Not a few of us will welcome any trumpeter's call, mystic or economic. One almost sympathises with the man who does not care a d——. It hardly matters who leads—Mr. Bonar Law or the Duke of Northumberland. What matters is whither? What are we going to *do* about Europe, about the debts, about trade, about peace?

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That is what the British election is about. Have we an opinion? If so, what is it? Can we do what the Turks did? Or are we, happy in our ignorance, sufficiently wise unto the day? And really that is all. Individuals hardly count. We are in the grip of world forces, of terrible economic laws, of relentless consequences; we are at the close of an epoch. Our political systems are worn out. Our battle cries mean nothing. Our very words are shams, caught in the machinery of a commercialism which reduces all men to a monetary equation which itself is false and broken. No one man, no one party, not even revolution, can put things right overnight; before us there lies the long tramp and struggle of hope and endeavour, a stern treadmill of evolutionary process. In the election we will light the first lamp. The European white race is the stake and the goal is the new order of co-operation. There, the United States of Europe. Here, the United Commonwealth. These are the visions. The liberators have yet to arise. They may not spring from the political cauldron as we know it. They will hardly be apparent in the coming turmoil of the polls. But the election will pave the ground. It will give us a picture of the dawn. It will restore to us our soul, the Allah of Turkey, and of things.

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England is really divided, though the people may not know it, on foreign policy—or the Treaties, the real and

whole question of government here, no matter what party or coalition is in office, being the consequences of the Treaties as they are and the consequences of denouncing them. Roughly, Labour and a prominent Left section are in favour of a Wellington peace, supported by a rapidly growing trade influence which dreads the results of Europe's declining purchasing-power; against which are ranged presumably Conservatism and all those who imagine that money comes from a bottomless pit situated somewhere in the neighbourhood of Potsdam. The *Entente* is the patriotic slogan of the Reparations enthusiasts, the *détente* is the slogan of the Left. Where exactly Lord Grey, for instance, stands I cannot fathom, for he appears to think that all our troubles derive from non-co-operation with France, whereas all our difficulties basically derive from co-operation in a series of treaties which have driven Europe into bankruptcy and England into a chronic poor-house of unemployed. But more than hugger-mugger is at issue. The Treaty of Versailles, about the interpretation of which our differences with France have arisen, was based upon the declared judgment that Germany alone secretly started the war to enslave Europe and must suffer the due penalty. Now this view can no longer be upheld. What is called the *Black Book* in France has shed considerable light on the pre-war activities of France and Russia, dispelling many of our preconceived notions; now the real Russian Yellow Book has been unearthed and published. It proves that the official Russian Yellow Book was a tissue of falsifications. It shows that by pre-arrangement Russian mobilisation was to be the declaration of war, on no matter what issue; it shows that the Russian Ambassador in Paris, Iswolsky, wired to Sasanov in Petrograd, July 31st, that the " French Minister of War told me in an emphatic and cordial tone that the Government is *firmly resolved to go to war*, and asked me to confirm the hope of the French General Staff that all our efforts ought to be directed against Germany, and that Austria ought to be treated as *quantité négligeable*."

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It also shows that Petrograd refused to consider Lord Grey's offer to bring peaceful pressure upon Russia. We have here new and terrible evidence of fact. It is impos-

sible to ignore it. We cannot in the teeth of the evidence now before the world continue the fiction of Germany's sole guilt, for we now actually know that Russia was the direct cause of the war in full agreement with France. To-day, all Europe groans under the penalty Treaties, ourselves included. This matter, whether publicly bruited or not, is not the least urgent of the election issues. Those who are for the penalty Treaties, for European bankruptcy, for the French policy of victimisation and militarism, will vote for the Right; all who are against such a policy, who want peace in Europe and good trade, will vote for the Left, and on the result will probably depend the problem of whether we shall denounce the Treaties and let in the light or continue to talk Reparations nonsense for the benefit of our two million unemployed who live on doles. There are at least eleven Turkish points of war in Europe, which any day may flare up, and any day may provoke another Chanak, and whoever is Prime Minister after the Election will have to deal with this war problem of Europe from the point of view of polarity of French and British interests. No peace is obtainable until the " poison " Treaties are denounced. America has already decided to withdraw her army of occupation; we should follow suit. There is, in short, only one constructive policy realisable. It is for us to co-operate with America and summon a specific Economic Conference to deal with the debts problem as a whole as the basis for common political action, and that should be the first duty of the new Government.

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The crash of the Coalition had long been inevitable, not only because of its blunders abroad, but because the people had grown weary of authority and of a mechanism of autocratic government. Mr. Lloyd George missed his chance last January; his fall dated from Genoa. The failure of that Conference, caused by the French, discredited him at home fatally. It is a pity he did not then resign, for the Coalition no longer had any justification and the Premier's legend had outlived its adhesions. Its peace record has been one of progressive failure. It has waged three wars—against Russia, against Ireland, finally against Turkey, though fortunately the guns did not actually go off, and it

has lost them all. It has been unable to settle anything. The dreary farce of Reparations still continues, and as the result all Europe has sunk into financial bankruptcy. France and England no longer understand one another because of the absence of a stated resolute policy of peace and of known principles governing them. About the debts nothing has been even attempted, and towards America, instead of a frank attitude, the Coalition has attempted futile and uninformed tactics. At home, doles is the only remedy. The persistent advice of economists has been contemptuously ignored; the Coalition had neither a European policy nor a trade policy, nor any policy save that of opportunism, until at last it collapsed at the first determined attack, miserably from inanition. It was high time. The whole country was sinking into unworthy levity out of sheer weariness of its political control. If an epitaph is needed, one may truly say: "The highest failure is better than the lowest success." Its first success has been its failure.

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And now what? An Election—"to clear." Then, no doubt a Conservative Government or possibly Coalition of Tories and ex-Coalitionists flanked, it may be, by a Unionist Opposition under the fighting presidency of the ex-Premier. Were Labour willing to combine with Liberalism the two would, without a doubt, sweep the country, but alas! any so sensible a co-operation may be discounted. The Liberals, in taking the coupon in 1918, discredited themselves; they stand to-day between two fires, and on economics they are still unfortunately unable to rise above the old theory of *laissez-faire* or see the necessity of a new economic orientation. Labour and Liberalism will thus be sworn foes at the polls, causing triangular contests with results on balance similar to the Conservative win at Newport. We shall probably thus get a Conservative majority which, on votes, will be little more than half that of the combined Left voting power, thereby giving the country a Government whose mandate is an absurdity because solely the upshot of a mechanism which is as unscientific and out of date as that governing the theory of money. Its life is hardly likely to be long. We may now have to look forward to a series of crises and new

Governments on Continental lines until some new leader appears strong enough to weld opinion into a cohesive unity; and perhaps that is the best thing that could happen.

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It is evident that Mr. Lloyd George will not retire. His real job is the fight, and as a hot political fight is about the only way we can hope to win through to new ideas and new methods of policy and reconstruction, the ex-Premier should certainly be able to perform robust service in the new *rôle* of critic, in which sphere of action there will be practically endless scope for virtuosity and energy. If the Unionist side of Conservatism, or the ex-Coalitionist side of Liberalism, gravitates into independent criticism, we shall see unusual liveliness in the next Parliament, which may rapidly galvanise opinion into a wholesome fighting interest in public affairs in place of the existing dead-weight apathy. In this struggle we shall obtain right perspective again, truer values, firmer foundations of belief both in ourselves and in others. For the war has discredited men and motives. Mr. Lloyd George's "radical sun" was not Kingship. He can now redate himself. His experience in foreign affairs should make him an invaluable critic. Retirement can hardly be his lot, indeed at this juncture no man can honourably retire. Sides must be taken. The curtain of the play has gone up. It is the duty of all men to take their stand—for or against humanity.

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We can all think once more—that is the meaning of the death of the Coalition. The policeman's umbrella is removed; deliverance has come. Only splendid effort can pull us out of the bog into which we have stumbled, above all, vision. The old ways, the old men, the old cries will no longer serve, but the first necessity is to throw off the men and mentality of war and to understand firmly what we mean by peace. If we mean only spoils and conquest, then the coming fight will be long and arduous. England's question is herself. Will she lead in the new process of evolution? Have we the soul and spirit of salvation? Our greatest danger is cynicism which implies acceptance. There is no hope on those lines. Our potentials are still gigantic. We have the Empire; we have our credit; we still have the genius of impersonal creation. These are

our assets. But war has made us unenthusiastic, tired, careless, commercial. Our neglect of the arts and of culture, of education, of intelligence, may prove our downfall in the coming years of competition, for the fate of humanity is Man. We want a true science of life, a new statement of economics industrial and imperial, a new mechanism of Parliamentary representation, and if, following blindly the narrow view of cash results mechanised in an exports system of industrialism, we neglect the land and the men who cultivate the land, we shall be building upon loose foundations. We go back to Party or Oranges and Lemons with the betting on the lemon, for it seems difficult to swallow Conservatism's preaching of economy and "out of Mesopotamia," but probably this is the cover for a Protectionist policy and a bargain with France, *i.e.*, the Rhine. If so, Britain will be in for a straight fight, and, if Mr. Lloyd George can return to principles, we may soon discover whether Liberalism is a live force or the only issue is to be Labour.

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The Premier fell because he no longer had a Press, and perhaps the most curious feature of the present situation is that the demagogue of Europe collapsed from the sheer dulness of political England under his sway and from the very dulness of a Press no longer able to discuss things on their merits, the effect of adulation and submissiveness, which, of course, is a static condition. Demos needs a Demogorgon; Mr. Lloyd George gave it a gorgonzola. A stout Parliamentary Opposition might have saved him. His question now is, can he form one?

President Wilson, M. Clemenceau, Orlando, and now Mr. Lloyd George, so pass into the night the men who made the Treaties. It is Nemesis. Now for the Treaties. Britain is awake again. Thrusting through the fog, the spirit and intelligence of the country are thirsting to grapple with the problems of the unperformed years, and if the people will but remain true to themselves and to their traditions, the creators will lead them forward, step by step, into the light of peace and progress.

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Books

ART.

THE NEW ART. By HORACE SHIPP. Cecil Palmer. 15*s*.

HALF of this book is concerned with the development of the new art, half with the illustration of its theories and its successes from the work of Lawrence Atkinson. The first half shows that the pioneer in any art is still as lonely as he was in Shakespeare's day. Shakespeare was called an " up-start crow " ; the modern lesser but still sincere artist is accused of deliberate laziness or deliberate bewilderment. The artist may—in fact usually will—at first delight in that thrill of power that we get from mastery over some technique, and will " play the sedulous ape " to the gods of his own choosing. But soon his own personality begins to make its claims, and he finds that greater than the thrill of power over medium is the thrill of struggle to express some abstract significance of life. Mr. Shipp gives us a picture of the development of modern art since its realisation that technique is a language. Mr. Shipp holds that Matisse speaks in the language of line, the cubists in the language of mass, and the impressionists in the language of colour

To us it seems that Matisse built up his fame by his experiments in colour, the cubists by their attempt to give plastic form to the abstract thoughts of humanity, and the impressionists by their desire to give genuine atmospheric effects rather than by a love of pure colour. Mr. Shipp's brilliant record as a critic of the art of the theatre has a little distorted his science of the arts of painting and sculpture.

The second half of the book is devoted to Lawrence Atkinson's theories and work, and this part will be probably controversial, but it should be suggestive, which is the main thing. He has an ingenious, lusty, and courageous champion in Mr. Shipp, who attributes to the sculptor the element of wonder and various other qualities which many people will repudiate. Mr. Shipp proceeds with real enthusiasm, and whatever we may think about his hero and sculptor, the apologist has done his work well and compiled quite a notable book of critical inspiration which should reach all those who welcome the new art, if there is one, and be welcomed by all those who think the opposite.

ECONOMICS.

MONEY AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE AFTER 1914. By PROFESSOR CASSEL. Constable. 10*s.* 6*d.*

To people who desire to understand the monetary position of Europe, this is quite the standard work which every newspaper in the land ought to have treated in a leading article. It states the case with admirable lucidity. The professor toys with Maynard Keynes' contention that the exchange is governed by "supply and demand," pointing out authoritatively that it is price level which determines the exchange—England and America should remember this—hence the all-important law that once the exchange value of a currency is stabilised on its price level, stabilisation must depend upon the invariability of that price level, which is the only measurement of exchange as against gold. It is on this law that eventually the paper currencies will be stabilised. Thus if marks are stabilised at 2,000 to the £, that must remain the price level of the old mark in Germany. This is a fascinating work—the true side of present-day romance now that "winter" has come.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

WILL O' THE WISP, OR THE ELUSIVE SHAKESPEARE. By GEORGE HOOKHAM. Basil Blackwell. 3*s.* net.

MR. HOOKHAM is not a Baconian—he tells us so several times—but he leaves the careful reader of his arguments with the impression that he is at least a Verulamite. William Shagsper of Stratford (either of them) is impossible. Ben Jonson knew who it was, but didn't tell. O rare Ben Jonson! Bacon remains the only known mind of sufficient capacity, whilst parallel passages from the plays and the writings afford valuable clues. Then Bacon was a "concealed poet," and so given to funny stories that it even shocked his admirers, whilst the metrical psalmody, quoted against him, is better than Milton's. But of the cyphers and cryptograms Mr. Hookham will have naught—in spite of a curious coincidence discovered by himself. He is, in fact, mainly

destructive, and carries his contempt and loathing of the money-grabbing Stratford actor as far as the authentics carry their hero worship. A book, in short, to stimulate both parties, written with acuteness and temper, which redeems it from the charge of mere controversy; but one wishes that he had dealt with the alleged death-mask as well as all the rest.

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIFE. By ALEC WAUGH. Collins. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

MR. ALEC WAUGH on schools stands on *terra firma*, and so this second outburst is likely to find a good public. He treats the subject very seriously, going seriatim through the stages of school-life, from initiation to the last glory. On the whole, Mr Waugh seems to be growing conservative, and there is just a touch of the "old boy" attitude towards school, which may be described as retrospective admiration, each year a recurrent decimal; nor does he venture upon the sex side of school-life, except quite generally. There are two grave omissions in a serious work on the schools. One, the neglect to handle the costs of education, a matter of such urgency that already the whole type of boy in the schools is changing; the other is the voluntary system with its absence of standards and control—in a word, the commercial side of the schools in post-war days, which must tend to lower the national education and so gravely handicap us in the ever-increasing struggle of brains and efficiency. The real problem is this. Are these commercial schools, kept up by the wealthy merchant class, serving the true national interests? What about the great professional class which can no longer afford them? A third book by Mr. Waugh is required.

SAFE MARRIAGE. By ETTIE ROUL. Heinemann. 2*s.* 6*d.*

THIS is a plain-spoken explanation, on the lines of Dr. Marie Stopes, of the physical remedies against infection by venereal disease and conception by the well-known war-worker, Ettie Roul. Perhaps the title is unhappily chosen. Marriage is not safe because sterile, and it seems a mistake to classify wedlock from that standpoint. The book fills a useful purpose, but the ground has been previously covered by Dr. Marie Stopes, who is the woman pioneer in this specific form of feminine education.

FICTION.

THE STIFF LIP. By W. L. GEORGE. Chapman and Hall. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

PERHAPS the "lure" (to use the correct word about novels) of this study—it is not a novel, and Mr. George would be incensed at any imputation to that effect—is realism, by which, it must be understood, is meant life treated as it is, instead of as it might be, and so the book opens without a hero, the lady being about thirty-eight. Mr. George is weary of the formula *à la* Dell, from virginity to the altar, and begins where most novels end—in discreet silence; which gives him his chance to "pot" the opposition quite as often as the red. In short, this is a psycho-analysis of, perhaps one ought to say a mollentrave on, a woman—women being Mr. George's speciality, and he proves himself a good physician. Bedside manner—admirable. Diagnosis—scientific. Prescription—now that is the point which shall not be revealed here. We (that awful anonymous we) think Mr. George has given us a Victorian

woman, for to-day surely no woman need, or would, re-accept a husband who has neglected her for nine years, but there is no knowing. Anyhow, the treatment is subtle and vivid. Mr. George does understand women. He presents a true "soul." Perhaps he expects the reaction we hear about. Perhaps his object is to reveal the hideous state of the law, but then women threw out the Divorce Bill! It is good reading, in some ways the best thing Mr. George has done.

THE TRUTH ABOUT VIGNOLLES. By ALBERT KINROSS. Duckworth. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

VIGNOLLES, "a man of past fifty who had always been in the thick of it," is, in his quiet and philosophical way, one of those literary figures that come to life. Mr. Kinross knows his world too well to make the cheap and obvious appeal to which the elderly hero is prone. Vignolles has no secret sorrow or sacrificial history, nor is he a protector of damsels in distress; he is just a decent chap with something sweet and unspoiled in his experienced heart, probably the result of a good digestion combined with an eye for fine things in a world full of material for the eye with a brain behind it. And so Vignolles talks to his old pal, with whom he has served in Egypt and Palestine, with an effect of naturalness which is a triumph for his creator. There are plenty of good yarns and a story which carries them to an unexaggerated conclusion. The Near East is seen through reminiscent tobacco smoke, in snug Temple chambers, in a consummate set of impressions very unlike *Chu Chin Chow*; one feels the sober reality behind which rests upon intimate knowledge, and one gets to know and like Vignolles. A book of authentic quality.

FLOWER OF ASIA. By GILBERT COLLINS. Duckworth. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

YOU either surrender to the cleanly, polite, immemorial charm of Japan, or you regard the whole inscrutable nation as a world peril, according to what you take with you to the Far East. Beranger of this book did the former and married a Japanese lady in spite of her traditional point of view—perhaps because of it and because she was, in her own exotic way, a perfect woman. Fanshaw, who sets out to demonstrate the shallow lightness of the Japanese woman, as an object-lesson in inferiority, takes the Western view of the Yellow Peril, so we get both opinions of a subject of peculiar interest to the world of to-day and leave the story with the question unsolved. This is an excellent method, because it stimulates the imagination, far better than out-and-out *parti pris*. Enough that Beranger—a high and uncommon type—sees further than competitive interests, into the heart of old Japan. For, quite apart from the story (most artistically told), *Flower of Asia* is a book which contributes something to one of the great questions of our times.

ROSSENAL. By ERNEST RAYMOND. Cassell. 7*s.* 6*d.*

MR. ERNEST RAYMOND, of *Tell England* fame, is making himself a place. *Rossenal* keeps up the personal quality of his work—nervous and easily visualised as a line drawing—with all the cleverness of knowing what to leave out to give a satisfying picture. As in

the best few books also, there is the quality of caricature in his figures —nothing gross or incredible, but vivid and amusing in its telling strokes and another proof of the concurrence of the arts in the modern conception of what is valuable. The story is full of interesting figures and clever, restricted grouping. Sir Gordon Hay, Bart., is so amusing and so onesidedly true to type, that we almost resent his son's affection for him. The two complacent sisters, Mrs. Macassa and Mrs. Chartreuse, live up to their uncompromising names, and the three schoolmasters are delightfully sketched figures. In short, *Rossenal* and his career take hold of one's perceptions with a grip that is of the brain rather than the affections; the love story is just as pictorial and dainty as the rest, and one is only surprised at the author's kindness of heart in allowing it to come to a happy consummation, for Mr. Raymond has a puckish inventiveness as well as a glowing kindliness, qualities which keep fate in the balance with life-like effect.

THE VAN ROON. By J. C. SNAITH. Appleton. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

VERY few blood and thunder merchants give us as much suspense and excitement as Mr. J. C. Snaith gets out of the adventures of a lost and found old master. Indeed, when the priceless little picture is safely housed in the keeping of the National Gallery, and the young couple, who have been intimately concerned in its discovery and preservation, have leisure and opportunity to go on with their love affair; when the drama of pursuit and frustration reaches the transformation scene with only Harlequin and Columbine to watch, one longs for the Clown, Pantaloon and Policeman to give verve to the soft and golden scene. The story, which opens in the shop of "S. Gedge, Antiques," in a back street off the Strand, is so faultless in verisimilitude, so full of surprise and inevitability combined, S. Gedge and the tricky dealers are so true to life, and "June" and "William" so well contrasted in their characters for the purposes of intrigue, that one almost grudges them the space for mere opulence and love-making. Still, Mr. Snaith is good at an idyll also; perhaps he knows his readers best.

THE TALE OF TRIONA. By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. Lane. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THAT heartening round of applause which greets the accepted entertainer is Mr. Locke's by right of conquest; but whilst it keeps the recipient up to a certain high level, it, perhaps a little, restricts his personal daring. The dear public loves the soft ending, the agreeable curtain which sends everyone home to bed in a cheerful mood. So when Alexis Triona, *alias* John Briggs, puts his car at a precipice he only kills his well-insured car, and shocks his offended wife into the slow music and lines which precede the National Anthem. Apart from this concession to popular taste, there are other bids for continued approval in the wholesome treatment of the post-war dancing and dining set, and the noble scorn of unpopular opinions at the other social pole; but Mr. Locke's habitual skill carries this handicap lightly, and makes Triona himself and his exacting little wife interesting in themselves, and in their strained relationship. The old family servant Myra would play better than she reads, but, alas! Mr. Locke is now the mere technician of popularity.

TRUANT YOUTH. By HELEN DE COURCY WILSON. Sampson Low. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

MISS HELEN DE COURCY WILSON has, from the very necessity of her story, created a new sort of heroine, innocent and hiddable as one of Shakespeare's less sophisticated women—say Miranda—beautiful, gay, and feminine in all but her simplicity, a real change from the shrewdly ironical young person who figures so frequently in the modern novel. "Nothing," says Bacon, "is so fulsome as a she fool"; but the man who signed the plays thought otherwise, and Drusilla Joy seems to recapture for us some of the tender and pathetic charm of the perfect heroine. True that it is necessity and not free will which serves in the creation; had Drusilla known the elements of modern conventions the story would have run off the rails altogether, so the authoress puts her into a sort of *Cranford* atmosphere of maidenly isolation, from which she enters into a world of romantic happenings very ingeniously carpentered. The pleasant story is told with so much sober sincerity that one accepts its machinery without question. The admirable young Baronet and his Lady Bellaston (Lady Strange), the more than Victorian maiden aunt who has run, like Charley's Aunt, through hundreds of appearances—the disinterested clergyman who contributes with manly firmness to his own disappointment, and the oversagacious solicitor—they are none of them newcomers, but Drusilla redeems them all by her peculiar charm. Young work, no doubt, but of a romantic promise which these faint damns must not discourage. It is something to have dared and succeeded with a Drusilla Joy, at three and six, too!

A LOVER AT FORTY. By GERALD CUMBERLAND. Grant Richards. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

WHEN Hamlet leaps into Ophelia's grave he becomes elemental man, he shocks us into palpitating depths of comprehension, he is most Hamlet and Shakespeare, at that dreadful moment. Mr. Cumberland uses a similar tremendous discord in his book. His Avril is lovely and pathetic, caught in the toils of her own ardent realism; pitiful in her mean attempt to deceive the man who loves her greatly—always incalculably interesting—but it is her elemental hatred of her mother, part scorn of the cheapening echo of her own emotions, and part youth's jealousy of smug maturity, which is the daring success of an unusually vivid bit of creative art. Basil Trent, the lover at forty, is a well-drawn strong man—Sir Rex, the perfect patron, his clever and attractive *protégé* Paul Mordurant—a musical genius from the North—and, above all, Judith, the intuitive spinster friend—are all admirable. The love stories, the music and the atmospheres are delightfully done; but it is the strange relationship of Avril and her mother which carries this story into the deeps where Mr. Cumberland is at his best, giving to this latest of his novels a power and authority which his past work has promised. The weak point in a fine book is the author's slender treatment of Mordurant's confidences to Avril; there is the danger of pathos in his too lightly sketched revolt. Nevertheless, *A Lover at Forty* is a powerful and artistic story.

BOOKS

FOLLOW MY LEADER. By AGNES MARY HAMILTON. Jonathan Cape. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

POLITICS is a dangerous subject for a novel; to combine love and politics in a romance or as a romance is even more venturesome. Mere man would probably have omitted the woman, but politics are to women and quite in particular to political women almost invariably a man whom they either hate or love, and so Mrs. Hamilton has contrived a thrilling love-story depending for action entirely upon political atmosphere. And the book is a success. It really is life-like, both behind the scenes and at the election; also she has managed to balance her sympathies so objectively that men like Sir Alfred Mond and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald might read it in the same railway carriage and shake hands. The love interest, too, is excellent. The author has a jolly outlook. She is very partial to the word "essentially," with which her characters so frequently begin a sentence, but this is a book to read now that the Coalition quintessentially is dead.

POETRY AND DRAMA.

FOUR POETS.

THANK heaven the impulse to write poetry and even to publish poetry has not ceased in our matter-of-fact mechanical world. In spite of all neglect and disdain, in spite of all the difficulties of publishers and public, the high-hearted few grow to the glorious company of apostrophisers. Poetry, like murder, will out, and these slim little books, with their regardless format, still are born—often are stillborn perhaps—but the conception, the gestation, the parturition, speak of something which survives all discouragement, of love, of laughter, of compassion, set to "hearse-like airs and carols," to solemn organ notes and scrannel pipes, from stringed lyres and syncopated banjos; still choiring to a world of prose. Here, then, are four of them. Jean Guthrie-Smith, with "ADVENTURE SQUARE" (Hodder and Stoughton, 6*s.* net), a solid volume, as such volumes go, divided into sections, "Glasgow," "London," and "Malabar"—about thirty poems to each. The passion behind these verses is mainly compassion. "Siren, Hooter, Horn, and Whistle!" Ships, markets, and seething tenements, with their uncompromising suggestions of economic slavery; the riverside with its lighters, tramps, and cranes, the streets of trams and coster barrows, with touches of Bloomsbury lodging-house squares, and sparrows, of munition shops and lecture halls—actuality seen vividly as a loved inferno, with Highgate Ponds and Epping Forest as hardly attained heavens—living stuff done with blood and tears and no small skill. Next, "THE DIVINE TRAGEDY," by A. St. John Adcock (Selwyn and Blount, 5*s.* net.). The last verse of the Prelude runs:

> "So, while His Churches echoed
> With charted praise and prayer,
> Christ sat amidst the Outcasts,
> And made His Christmas there."

Then the gods in exile hear news of the world from Hermes, and there follows the narration irony of the impact of the Christ returned upon social climbers, plump parsons and society butterflies—a visit by a Christian politician to the carpenter's shop, and a row with police in

Hyde Park. This gives Mr. Adcock scope for hot gospelling in heroic couplets, of which he takes full and impressive advantage. Mr. L. D'O. Walters, in paper cover "POEMS" (C. W. Daniel, 3*s.* 6*d.*), is, in turn, erotic, philosophic, and picturesque—mostly brief impressions, many of them of excellence—at his simplest is best. "The Little Fields of Brittany," three quatrains long, for example. "No. 5" is another happy number at Chelsea. So is the little note on "Chimneys," whilst "The Valley of the Adour" gives him three little pictures of real beauty—uneven stuff, but with joy in it. "POEMS, 1920-1921," by K. W. Monsarrat (John Murray, 3*s.* 6*d.*), is a little cloth-bound volume of well-made verse, coldly classical in type. To quote the advertisement, "Without being in any degree didactic, they suggest the inevitable growth of content out of a simple regard of the realities of life and the living." Woe is me for the inevitable growth of content.

FOUR COMEDIES BY CARLO GOLDONI. Edited by CLIFFORD BAX. Cecil Palmer. 25*s.*

WE have no room to criticise Goldoni's plays admirably presented in this well-got-up tome by Mr. Clifford Bax. Their interest lies in technique and vivacity of handling, which make him highly readable, for, like all good things, they endure. Though his object was to give Italy a national drama, he is very French in treatment, and wrote in French, but surely few will agree with Mr. Bax, who apparently rates him higher than Molière; in sheer wit he is much the inferior.

BIOGRAPHY.

H. G. HAWKER, AIRMAN. By MURIEL HAWKER. Hutchinson. 18*s.* net.

THE tragic death of Hawker after his Atlantic flight and romantic rescue is fit subject for a book, and his wife has related the story of his career and of the man with affectionate enthusiasm. He was a great type, a man who never gave in—the new man of the air and of the war. Excellent photographs adorn this biography, which young and old will read with a national pride.

TRAVEL.

THE PROBLEM OF CHINA. By BERTRAND RUSSELL, F.R.S. Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

THERE seems something paradoxical in Mr. Bertrand Russell's "discovery" of China and of the calm and seraphic wisdom of her venerable culture. Mr. Russell is enthusiastic. He went to teach, he stayed to learn. He notes signs of a renascence, and dreads the effects of Western industrialism upon the Chinese, to-day so peaceful, so honest. He pleads for a Chinese "patriotism." To those who don't know them, this is a very useful and carefully considered book. Who knows, perhaps many of us will emigrate to China before very long in search of a truer life!